

Attorney: Hospital should've caught mammogram problems

By BECKY PURSER
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WARNER ROBINS — Sixteen lawsuits recently filed in relation to mammo-grams that were allegedly falsified at Perry Hospital are all about ac-countability, the attorney who filed them said.

“All these brave ladies came forward because they didn’t want (what hap-pened to them) swept under the rug,” said Neal Graham, a Macon attorney representing the women.

The lawsuits were filed March 30 in Bibb County Superior Court.

All 16 women experienced the ordeal of learning that their mammograms

were never read by a doctor and had to have repeat mammograms, Graham said. Several of the repeat mammograms showed abnormalities that resulted in additional procedures such as needle biopsy or lumpectomy, he said.

“All had nightmares and fears and

SEE MAMMOGRAM, 7A

‘No one else will buy it’

Plant Scherer
coal ash
pond
worries
neighbors
as Georgia
Power
buys and
levels
homes



GRANT BLANKENSHIP/gblankenship@macon.com
Mark Goolsby, left, his wife, Wanda, and their 2-year-old grandson Micah Adkerson stand near the pasture behind the house that has been in his family since before the Civil War. The house also happens to be across from the Plant Scherer coal ash pond. Goolsby says the goats he raises are either short-lived or often have birth defects and that his mother has suffered from chronic sinus infections and other medical problems.

By S. HEATHER DUNCAN
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The home among the trees was supposed to be Mark Goolsby’s inheritance. His 78-year-old mother now lives in the large, white, wood farmhouse that his family built before the Civil War.

But Goolsby says he’ll never live there now.

That’s because across the street and through those trees is one of the largest coal ash ponds in the country. It belongs to Plant Scherer, a coal-fired plant that came to the neighborhood considerably later than the Goolsby family. In the mid-

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1970s, Goolsby said, “when (Georgia Power) bought 350 acres from my dad, they told him we’d never know they were there.”

Those acres are now part of an unlined pond where Georgia Power deposits about 1,000 pounds of toxic coal ash a day. Neither federal nor Georgia rules require ground-water monitoring around the pond. The federal Toxic Release Inventory shows that in 2010 alone, the pond received ash containing thousands of pounds of heavy metals and radio-

SEE SCHERER, 6A

“We’re living a slow death. I didn’t used to have asthma. I ain’t got proof of anything. I just know it’s dirty. ... Ash from the pond is all over everything we’ve got.”

Wayne Smith, who lives on Luther Smith Road close to Plant Scherer and is awaiting test results on his well water

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Then-Army Capt. Archibald Butt, pictured here in 1908, died on the Titanic. An Augusta native, he was a reporter and editor for The Macon Telegraph for a short time in the late 1800s.

‘A soldier to the last’

Maj. Archibald Butt, former Telegraph reporter and editor, aide to presidents, was hailed as hero on the Titanic

By RODNEY MANLEY
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As the RMS Titanic sank slowly into the icy Atlantic, a panic-stricken man rushed toward a lifeboat loaded with women and children, only to be stopped in his tracks by Maj. Archibald “Archie” Butt.

Butt, chief military aide to the president, snatched the man by his neck, slamming his head against a rail, then gave him a stern warning.

“Sorry,” Butt said. “Women will be attended to first or I’ll break every bone in your body.”

That account given to

The New York Times by survivor Renee Harris was one of several praising Butt’s actions on the doomed ship.

“When the time came for it, he was a man to be feared,” Harris said. “He was a soldier to the last.”

As reporter and then editor for The Macon Telegraph and other newspapers in the South, Butt wrote headlines. After the Titanic disaster, he made the headlines across the country, hailed as a hero whose calm and courage helped save lives on the ship.

Butt “showed men how to behave” when

SEE TITANIC, 2A

THE RAIL
YOUR NEWS EXPRESS

Business booms on Bass Road

BUSINESS, 1D

Local Best Buys not closing

Best Buy on Saturday announced the locations of 50 stores that it is closing this year, including seven in California, six in Illinois and six in the company’s home state of Minnesota.

The struggling electronics chain said last month that it would close some of its big box stores, cut 400 corporate jobs and trim \$800 million in costs. Best Buy plans to open 100 smaller, more profitable Best Buy Mobile stores.

In Georgia, stores in Fayetteville and Loganville are closing. Both are in the Atlanta area.

— Associated Press

State seeks historic downtown photos

A Georgia agency is looking for original photos that show off “hidden gems” from historic downtown areas in the state.

The state Historic Preservation Division is sponsoring its third photo contest during Preservation Month in May. The agency is asking Georgians to send in photos of historic downtown office buildings, courthouses, churches, parks and streetscapes that reflect the theme “Discovering Georgia’s Hidden Gems.” Entries must be received by May 24. More information is available on the Historic Preservation Division’s website: www.georgiashpo.org.

— Associated Press



A Georgia Power lock is on the driveway gate of a house the company bought on Turkey Run Road, across from Plant Scherer. Georgia Power has been quietly buying up properties near the plant.

SCHERER FROM 1A

active compounds including arsenic, vanadium, and chromium.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that up to 1 in 50 residents nationally who live near ash ponds could get cancer from the arsenic leaking into wells. The EPA also predicts that unlined ash ponds can increase other health risks, such as damage to the liver, kidneys and central nervous system, from contaminants such as lead.

A massive 2008 spill from a Tennessee coal ash pond led to greater scrutiny of the dams that hold these ponds in place, and the EPA promised new rules for storing coal ash. The process led to broader awareness of a more long-term health threat: groundwater contamination from the ponds.

After the Tennessee spill, the EPA requested groundwater testing near selected power plants, finding ash pond contaminants in the water near 29 power plants in 16 states, including Florida and the Carolinas.

Nevertheless, four years later, new coal ash rules still haven't been finalized, and a lawsuit was filed April 5 to force the Obama administration to act.

Meanwhile, Goolsby and some of his neighbors have begun wondering whether their health has been harmed by the wind-blown ash from piles next to the pond or whether the water seeping from the pond into the ground. Georgia Power, majority owner of the plant, has been buying residential property in the area and tearing down the houses.

Residents' concerns led the Georgia Department of Public Health to decide last week that it will gather information about Scherer's pollution and its health effects. Also last week the Sierra Club, working with University of Georgia researchers, took well water samples from about a dozen neighbors to test for toxic heavy metals.

Wayne Smith, who built his home on Luther Smith Road in 1969 and is now one of the closest to Plant Scherer, awaits his well water results. Sitting in a swing next to a sandbox crowded with his grandson's toy trucks, he described the asthma and sinus problems that require him to see a lung specialist.

"We're living a slow death," he said. "I didn't used to have asthma. I ain't got proof of anything. I just know it's dirty.... Ash from the pond is all over everything we've got."

Georgia Power spokesman Mark Williams said the pond complies with all environmental laws and received the highest possible rating when the EPA last inspected it.

Purchase and demolish

Monroe County property records show Georgia Power has spent about \$1.1 million buying property near Plant Scherer between 2008 and the end of 2010. But the true number may be higher. It doesn't include some unknown purchases, and Georgia Power property doesn't normally show up on a Monroe County property search because it is not taxed in the same manner as typical residential property. (The state Department of Revenue sets the property value of Plant Scherer, and Georgia Power pays its portion of taxes to Monroe County based on the county's millage rate.)

The purchases visible on the Monroe County property appraiser's website include acreage on Ga. 87, Luther Williams Road and Turkey Run Road.

Homes in the area range from brick houses with benches scattered under the trees to decades-old trailers with porch roofs made from tarps.

From Luther Smith Road, the smokestacks of Plant Scherer are visible through meadows dotted with pine trees where deer scamper. Part of the land around the ash pond is leased to the



Georgia Power, the majority owner of Plant Scherer, seen here from the entrance road to the plant by Lake Juliette, has been buying residential property in the area and tearing down houses.



All that remains of a house on Luther Smith Road across from the Plant Scherer ash pond is an open field with a dogwood tree and some tiny pine saplings. Georgia Power bought the property and destroyed the house.

"The age of people dying around here is what bothers me so much," said Luther Smith Road resident Terry Lancaster, rattling off a list of people who contracted cancer or died suddenly in their 50s.

She gestured to the ceiling fan, which was laden with a quarter inch of dust just a few weeks after she last cleaned it. She's also seen how the water from her well rusts the inside of one washing machine after another.

"You hear a lot of stuff, and you don't know what's true and not true," Lancaster said. "But stuff coming out of that plant cannot be good for you."

Georgia Department of Natural Resources as a wildlife management area, frequented by bow hunters and bird watchers.

Goolsby's aunt, Gloria Dorsett, recently sold her white brick house on Luther Smith Road to Georgia Power and moved away. She had spoken to The Telegraph and written letters to a local paper in prior years, complaining of the ash eating away at her home and causing her to have nosebleeds, among other health problems. She signed a nondisclosure agreement when she sold to Georgia Power.

Dorsett is one of four Luther Smith Road residents who sold their homes to Georgia Power. In at least some of the cases, the company demolished the houses and capped the wells. Dorsett's former property is now an empty field surrounded by barbed wire.

The flurry of purchases and demolitions, combined with recent uranium contamination problems in many Juliette wells, has some Plant Scherer neighbors suspecting that the company knows of problems with the water.

But Georgia Power officials say they are simply responding to neighbors' wishes to sell their property as the plant expands.

"Georgia Power routinely purchases land located near its power plants, including Plant Scherer," spokeswoman

an Konswello Monroe said in an e-mail.

She noted that ongoing construction at Plant Scherer has meant the company is using an additional 120 acres for operations.

"As the operational footprint at the plant expands, Georgia Power will continue to consider acquiring additional properties on a case-by-case basis" when property owners approach the company wishing to sell, Monroe said.

Carla Coley, environmental director for the North Central Health District, said capping the wells heightened her concern about the safety of the groundwater. Many residents had the same reaction.

But Williams, the Georgia Power spokesman, said the company demolishes structures that don't have a good business use, and Georgia law requires that abandoned wells be capped for safety reasons.

Although most neighbors don't really want to move, many of them expressed interest in selling to Georgia Power.

Don Yost, who built his home "nail by nail" alongside his wife 30 years ago, said, "I got to sell to them or no one. No one else will buy it."

Some family and neighbors of residents who sold to Georgia Power say they believe the company is not only buying land but pay-



Resident Mark Goolsby says this kid, born with underdeveloped front legs, is one of a group that is among the first in about five years that have not died on his family's property near Plant Scherer either at birth or soon thereafter.

ing settlements to those who move away.

Williams, with Georgia Power, said, "We have never settled any lawsuits with anyone living near Plant Scherer, and we don't comment on our agreements with individuals."

Macon personal injury attorney Brian Adams said he thinks taking a buyout is "a terrible solution until more research is done and we know more about what the cause is." He said his firm is interested in representing plaintiffs who believe they've been harmed by pollution from Plant Scherer, adding that a lawsuit could provide access to documents that could be used to hold the company or its employees accountable.

Health concerns

The Georgia Department of Public Health plans to conduct a "scoping" process early this summer to gather available information about the health effects of Plant Scherer's pollution. Health officials will identify gaps in that information and questions that need to be asked.

Residents who live near Plant Scherer express varying degrees of alarm about the plant's impact on their health, but they all have plenty of questions.

Kristal Smith, Wayne Smith's daughter-in-law, said her family has let Georgia Power know they are interested in selling, but they haven't heard back yet. The Smith properties back up to a new gypsum pond next to the ash pond.

"Either way, we're moving in the near future" because of their health concerns, she said. It's a tough decision, especially for her husband, who was raised in the house next door and whose parents live next door.

But Kristal Smith — a trained paramedic who at age 34 is experiencing unexplained hair loss — is worried about her children, ages 4 and 12. Her 4-year-old son has begun having apparent neurological problems in recent weeks.

Smith says some of the family's abundant breathing

problems are likely inherited, and she says she doesn't have enough information to blame Georgia Power for the other health issues.

"I'm not fearful of Georgia Power," she emphasized. "But when you're talking about your child and what prolonged exposure might mean for them, it's kind of scary."

The Smiths and others perceive that the airborne ash has become more pronounced in the last couple of years. During that period, Plant Scherer starting building a pond to store gypsum that is a byproduct of scrubbers that reduce the plant's greenhouse gas and ozone pollution. Georgia Power also cut down more of the trees that formed a buffer between Luther Smith Road homes and the plant.

Another factor could be that the company stores some ash dry and, Williams said, has been setting materials related to ongoing plant construction on this "dry area of the pond." He said this presents no safety threat to employees, equipment or the pond's dike.

But residents say the arrangement means that vehicles drive over the ash regularly, stirring up dust. Kevin Chambers, communications director for the state Environmental Protection Division, said the state does not inspect coal ash piles, and there are no rules requiring power companies to limit airborne dust from them.

Goolsby wonders whether the plant's switch to Western low-sulphur coal may have somehow changed the nature of the ash, which he says coats cars and furniture with a sparkly brown film.

Goolsby's mother has had chronic asthma and bronchitis, as well as recurrent kidney infections. His father died a decade ago of a rare form of liver cancer, he said.

Don Yost has had trouble breathing, and his wife's hair has thinned.

"We've had health problems, but I don't know if it's anything to do with the plant," said Yost, who spent his career working for power companies (although not Georgia Power) before his

retirement. He emphasized that he's not against Plant Scherer, but he'd like more environmental testing.

Residents keep track of health problems in the neighborhood. Kristal Smith said her neighbors have experienced a range of types of cancers, various breathing or lung problems and joint pain.

"I think everybody has the headaches and sinus problems across the board," said Cindy Griffin, who lives across Ga. 87 from Plant Scherer. She has questions about runoff and groundwater from the plant, especially after finding some contamination in her well.

Some residents completed a recent public health survey that focused on uranium and radon. Officials with the Georgia Department of Public Health have said they may distribute another survey more focused on Plant Scherer neighbors and the contaminants present in coal ash.

Depending on the results, the state could then do a "cluster" study to find out whether there is a cluster of particular health problems in the area.

A certain number of cancers and common health problems such as heart disease will occur in any neighborhood. But a cluster study looks for uncommon illnesses, patterns of symptoms among neighbors, or victims who don't fit the typical profile for their health condition.

"The age of people dying around here is what bothers me so much," said Terry Lancaster, rattling off a list of people who contracted cancer or died suddenly in their 50s.

Lancaster has lived in her Luther Smith Road home for 22 years, raising children and now grandchildren there, but she's interested in contacting Georgia Power to see if the company might buy her house.

As she spoke, her toddler grandson in his diaper and dinosaur T-shirt listened silently as a fan circled slowly overhead. She scooped him up, hugged him and said, "This is why I'm worried."

Lancaster gestured to the ceiling fan, which was laden with a quarter inch of dust just a few weeks after she last cleaned it. She's also seen how the water from her well rusts the inside of one washing machine after another. Lancaster, who said she doesn't have health insurance, is afraid to drink her water but still cooks with it.

"You hear a lot of stuff, and you don't know what's true and not true," Lancaster said. "But stuff coming out of that plant cannot be good for you."

To contact writer S. Heather Duncan, call 744-4225.

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Sacrifice

on the home front



Chief Master Sgt. Patrick Bowen hands out dog tags to military-affiliated students at Russell Elementary in observance of "Month of the Military Child" during a school pep rally Friday afternoon.

JASON VORHEES/jvorhees@macon.com

Children from military families face unique challenges

By CARYN GRANT
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WARNER ROBINS — Kendall Raley fiddles with the silver beaded chains around her neck. On them hang three dog tags — one is hers and one is her father's. The third she received earlier in April in commemoration of Month of the Military Child.

"I never take them off, especially when he's gone," she said. Her father, Master Sgt. Robert Raley, has been in the military for 22 years and is currently stationed at Robins Air Force Base. On Kendall's right arm dangles a colorful array of rubber wristbands, several of which have military significance.

A burgundy bangle reads "Operation Military Kids," the camouflage band reads "Supporting our Troops," and another green one says, "Defending Freedom." A fourth woven, camel skin bracelet has no inscription but was a gift her father bought for her while deployed overseas.

SEE MILITARY, 6A



GRANT BLANKENSHIP/gblankenship@macon.com

A view of Plant Scherer from Luther Smith Road. At least one house on Luther Smith Road has been bought and bulldozed, with the property replanted with pine saplings by Georgia Power.

Neighbors want more testing

By S. HEATHER DUNCAN
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PART 2 OF 2

The federal government regulates coal ash ponds only through their permits to release wastewater into public rivers or streams. Any further regulation is left up to states.

Georgia requires nothing additional until the ponds are closed. Only then is ground-water testing required.

Some neighbors of Monroe County's Plant Scherer, one of the largest coal-fired power plants in the country, have expressed concern that the plant and its coal ash pond may be harming their health. Many of them say they want more testing to be required.

Although Monroe County commissioners are considering extending water lines to some neighborhoods with uranium contamination in their wells, those areas

Regulation of coal ash ponds like

Plant Scherer's is minimal

SEE SCHERER, 6A

Execution date opens old wounds in Taylor County

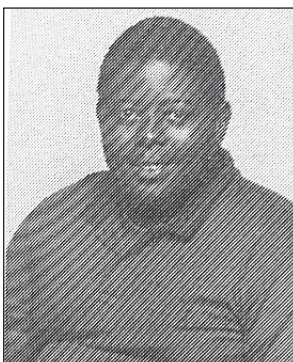
Some see closure, others ambivalent over impending sentence

By JIM MUSTIAN
The Ledger-Enquirer

REYNOLDS — A generation has passed, but folks in tight-knit Taylor County still recall the shock and fear they felt the night of Daniel Greene's knifing rampage.

Late one Friday night, in September 1991, Greene robbed the Suwanee Swifty on the main drag here, gashing a clerk with a filleting knife and fatally stabbing Bernard Walker, a former schoolmate who walked in on the attack. Before the sun came up, Greene had severely wounded three others in a spree that spanned three counties.

"To have a homicide right in downtown, right in front of a convenience store, it's



File photo

Bernard Walker was killed on Sept. 27, 1991, at a convenience store in Taylor County. His killer, Daniel Greene, is set to be executed Thursday.

just almost unheard of," said Nick Giles, the retired Taylor County sheriff. "It really gets the talk going."

Two decades later, the

community is confronting the case anew as word of Greene's impending execution makes its way to peach country. While some see a semblance of closure, others have greeted the news with ambivalence and expressions of sympathy for the affected families.

"Everybody's got a lot of mixed emotions," said Wayne Smith, Taylor County Schools superintendent.

Since his conviction in 1992, Greene has filed appeal after appeal, but the U.S. Supreme Court last month declined to take up his case. Barring a stay or last-minute clemency, he'll be put to death at 7 p.m. Thursday in Jackson.

SEE EXECUTION, 5A

Consolidation could bring new government techniques, headaches

By JIM GAINES and MIKE STUCKA
Telegraph staff

The creation of a consolidated Macon-Bibb County government could lead to a government wholly new and modeled on the best practices of other governments. But it could also lead to lots of implemen-

tation headaches, officials said.

Voters will consider a July 31 referendum that could merge Macon, Bibb County and Payne City governments. Dale Walker, Macon's interim chief executive officer, said the formation of a new government could lead

SEE GOV'T, 5A

THE RAIL

YOUR NEWS EXPRESS

Attendance high at Perry Dogwood Festival

LOCAL & STATE, 3A

UGA IX could debut at season opener

The newest beloved mascot of the University of Georgia could be pacing the sidelines of Sanford Stadium this fall.

Sonny Seiler, whose family has provided the famed English bulldogs known as Uga since the 1950s, says "We hope to present the dog physically at the first home game."

The Athens Banner-Herald reports a decision



is expected by August, when the dogs under consideration will turn 1, guaranteeing they are big enough.

— Associated Press



Business 7A
Classified 5B
Comics 3B

Commentary 9A
Crossword 4B
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85/62

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WEATHER, 10A

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SCHERER FROM 1A

are generally south of the plant, whose immediate neighbors also rely on well water.

Four years ago, the earthen dam ruptured at a much smaller ash pond at a Tennessee Valley Authority plant near Knoxville. The tide of more than 1 billion gallons of liquid ash waste destroyed homes, damaged property and contaminated a creek and a river.

In 2010, the federal Environmental Protection Agency proposed new regulations for coal ash, with two alternatives. One would treat it as a hazardous waste, triggering many more safeguards and expensive storage and reporting requirements. The other would basically ask power companies to police themselves, with enforcement coming through citizen lawsuits.

Both versions would have required groundwater testing around the ponds. But despite an unusually long time lag, no decision has been made. EPA officials have said they hope to issue a final rule sometime this year.

EPA spokeswoman Stacy Kika stated in an e-mail: "EPA is aware of the concerns around coal ash management and disposal and the agency is committed to protecting people's health and the environment. ... We are reviewing the more than 450,000 comments received on the proposed rule" and will make a decision only after evaluating them all.

Earlier this month, the law firm Earthjustice, on behalf of a consortium of environmental groups, filed suit to force the EPA to issue a rule. The Sierra Club and the French Broad Riverkeeper are among the groups that signed on.

"You don't have to be a scientist to figure out what happens if you dump a bunch of toxic sludge in an unlined hole: It's going to leach into the groundwater and flow toward the river," said Hartwell Carson, the French Broad riverkeeper.

Georgia Power spokesman Mark Williams said the company would not object to more groundwater testing around Scherer's ash pond.

"We fully support additional testing by (the Georgia Environmental Protection Division) and other regulatory agencies and will aggressively work with them to develop a testing regime that provides the answers they seek," he said in an e-mail. "We have a proven record at Plant Scherer — and at all of our plants — of doing what it takes to not just meet but exceed state safety regulations, and we will continue to uphold that commitment to our community."



This satellite photo shows Plant Scherer and the surrounding area in Monroe County.

Residents say they want state officials to gather more information so they'll know for sure.

Mark Goolsby, whose elderly mother lives on Luther Smith Road next to the ash pond, thinks hair samples should be tested for uranium and arsenic. His neighbor Don Yost said he'd like to see air testing under a variety of conditions, since some of the coal ash is stored dry.

Most concerns about toxicity from ash ponds focus on heavy metals such as arsenic and mercury.

Water samples from neighbors' wells were taken by University of Georgia researchers recently and will be tested for more than a dozen heavy metals and other pollutants common in ash ponds, with the results reported to residents in about a month, said Seth Gunning, a conservation organizer for the Sierra Club in Georgia.

Data from the federal Toxic Release Inventory show Plant Scherer and Plant Branch among those across the country that deposit the most toxic heavy metals in their ash ponds. Scherer ranked fourth in the country for such releases in 2006, according to a TRI analysis by the Institute for Southern Studies.

"Right now, families simply have no protections against toxic heavy

metals that are potentially leaching from coal waste into drinking water, and because (there) is no active monitoring the community has no information about the risk these facilities pose to the health and livelihood of their families," Gunning said in an e-mail. "We hope that this preliminary investigation will help the community both identify potential sources of toxins already found in drinking water, and to shed additional light on the extent of the contamination."

Uranium contamination

More than 30 Monroe County residents have found unsafe levels of uranium in their well water. Some residents have had their hair tested and discovered that they have uranium poisoning. Digesting uranium can cause kidney dysfunction, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

UGA data shows most of the wells with elevated uranium were in Juliette but south of Plant Scherer. The few Luther Smith Road residents interviewed who had tested their well water said their results showed no uranium problems.

Cooperative Extension and health department officials have said the uranium contamination probably comes from naturally occurring

uranium beneath the bedrock of the Piedmont region.

"The natural occurrence of uranium in well water has been well documented," said Williams, the Georgia Power spokesman, citing past statements by University of Georgia officials.

But residents wonder if the ash pond might be contributing.

It's hard to know for sure, since few wells outside Monroe County have been tested for comparison, and there is no regular groundwater testing around the ash pond. Georgia Power officials have said tests of a well next to the pond in 2008 turned up no unsafe levels of toxic or radioactive contaminants.

Although Georgia Power must report the amount of various toxic elements it releases into the ash pond every year, radioactive uranium is not among them. EPA officials in Atlanta and Washington were unable to locate any information about the amount of uranium in Scherer's pond, saying it did not appear to be something the company is required to report.

Uranium is generally present in coal ash, but in smaller amounts than other radioactive elements such as strontium, vanadium and thallium, according to a 2009 report by the Electric Power Research Institute.

Scherer released more thallium into its coal ash pond between 2000 and 2006 than any other power plant in the country, according to a 2009 coal ash report based on Toxic Release Inventory data. Thallium can harm the heart, nervous system, liver or kidneys and cause death from a very low dose.

Radioactive elements in coal ash are generally 10 times more concentrated than they were in the original coal, according to the U.S. Geological Survey and the University of North Dakota Energy and Environment Research Center.

But the amount of radiation in coal ash varies with the type of coal used. And its ability to be transported to the groundwater is influenced by the acidity of the water as well as the nature of the soil, according to a 1997 report by the U.S. Geological Survey.

That report stated, "Radioactive elements in coal and fly ash should not be sources of alarm. The vast majority of coal and the majority of fly ash are not significantly enriched in radioactive elements, or in associated radioactivity, compared to common soils or rocks."

Nevertheless, attorney Lisa Evans argues that "the residents of Juliette are certainly justified in looking to the coal plant as a potential source of uranium." Evans is senior administrative counsel for Earthjustice, the law firm that is suing the Obama administration over failing to issue new coal ash rules.

"Because Plant Scherer's unlined coal ash pond appears to be the closest source of toxic chemicals to the neighborhood, the logical first step is to thoroughly investigate this source," Evans said in an e-mail. "Testing should also include the coal ash itself because residents may also be exposed to fugitive dust that contains radioactivity."

Evans said the EPA or the state should immediately require Plant Scherer to install a groundwater monitoring system around the pond.

"It is inexcusable that Plant Scherer was not already doing this in light of the pond's proximity to drinking water wells," she said. "It is also inexcusable that the state of Georgia does not require such monitoring. If this was a dump containing banana peels and not toxic waste, the state would have required a liner and groundwater monitoring. Nonsensically, the fact that the pond contains toxic coal ash gives it a pass under state and federal law."

To contact writer S. Heather Duncan, call 744-4225.

MILITARY FROM 1A

Master Sgt. Raley has been deployed four times during the eighth grader's career at Northside Middle School and returned from his last stint only recently.

"He came back a month and 12 days ago," Kendall said Thursday.

Kendall's life is a balance between wanting to be a normal kid and pride in being a military kid.

"I want to be called a military kid," she said. "It makes me feel special, but sometimes you're just a normal kid and want to do normal things. It's hard in ways because your parents have to leave on deployment. It's especially hard because I'm a daddy's girl."

Kendall, 13, is one of more than 7,700 Houston County students who are military affiliated — more than 3,000 have parents who are active duty — making up 28 percent of the district's student population. More than 89,000 children statewide have at least one parent currently serving in the military.

Every day in Middle Georgia may be armed forces appreciation day, but since 1986 when designated by then Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, April has been for the children who support service members both in and out of uniform.

"A lot of times we tend to get the focus as service members wearing the uniforms for the sacrifices we make, but not one of us could do anything without the support we get from our families," said Chief Master Sgt. Patrick Bowen, during an assembly at Russell Elementary School Friday. "We could not do the things that we do without the love and support

that we get at home."

With one parent around six months out of the year, there are a lot more chores around the house and more time spent helping younger siblings with homework, Kendall said.

Those times when the family is all together are packed with vacations and family time, sometimes just laughing while hanging around the house, she said.

"He's marking memories in our minds, so when he's gone you have things to remember," she said.

Though her father is constantly on the move, Kendall has been in the Houston County School System since first grade after her family moved from Florida.

That opportunity is one ounce of consistency many military children are not allowed.

A constant state of transition

Kaitlyn Kalch, 17, and Chris Watts, 16, have each been at Veterans High School for about a year.

Watts, a sophomore, has

lived in Alaska and other parts of Georgia, and Kalch, a junior who was born on Robins Air Force Base, seems to have come full circle. Both also previously called Germany and Florida home.

The average military child will move six to nine times during their K-12 years, said Lesley Darley, Robins Air Force Base school liaison officer.

Col. David Southerland, vice commander of the 78th Air Base Wing at Robins Air Force Base, has taken note of his own children's experiences.

Throughout his more than 30-year tenure in the Air Force, his family has moved 16 times, he said Tuesday during a Houston County board of education meeting.

"We've lived in four different countries and lived throughout about half of the United States," he said. "For me, that's a great opportunity. My children have some experiences that some kids won't ever experience, living in different cultures and learning what different, other people are like; but I was born and raised in Atlanta and I moved one time in

my entire life and I was traumatized just from one time. There are some challenges that go along with being a military child, and one of those things is to move.

"One of the great things about moving around is that you eventually end up in great communities, and one of those great communities is here in Houston County."

Kalch and Watts have each navigated the life of military children. They both nod in agreement while the other explains what it's like, and often have had some experiences similar enough that they finish each other's thoughts.

For both students, athletics have served as an avenue to form new bonds.

Still, switching schools can bring about issues with different school calendars, curriculums and adjusting to different cultures, they said.

To help alleviate some of the challenges, 36 states have adopted the Interstate Compact on Educational Oppor-

tunity for Military Children, which seeks to make transition easier by, among other things, waiving courses for graduation if similar course work has been completed in another state and accepting end-of-course exams and other tests from other states in lieu of requirements in the receiving state.

According to the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission, Georgia state legislators have yet to adopt the compact.

At the local level, Darley, the base school liaison, organizes comfort and assistance programs for military students, sometimes orchestrating surprises with deployed parents who come home early.

Darley also works with Houston County 4-H, which received a \$20,000 grant to bring to the area Operation: Military Kids, which provides activities and events for children impacted by deployment.

Saluting military children

Military students face their own unique set of challenges, stated a Month of the Military Child proclamation read Tuesday at the board of education meeting.

"These children are a source of pride and honor for us all, and it is only fitting that we take time to recognize their contributions, celebrate their spirit, and let our men and women in uniform know that while they are taking care of us, we are taking care of their children," the proclamation read. "When parents serve in the military; their children also serve and are our heroes, too."

Chief Master Sgt. Bowen summed it up for Russell Elementary students a few days later.

"I salute you for everything you do for your parents," he said.

To contact writer Caryn Grant, call 256-9751.

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SCHERER FROM 1B

Seth Gunning, a conservation organizer for the Sierra Club of Georgia, said individual results from the study were sent back to well owners, although many said Thursday they had not yet received them.

The research was spurred by increasing concern from some Juliette residents who live near the plant, which is majority-owned by Georgia Power, about the potential effects of Scherer's coal ash pond on their health. More than 30 Monroe County residents, many living southeast of the plant, have found unsafe levels of uranium in their water during the past 18 months.

Coal ash ponds and piles, where power plants place what's left after burning coal to make electricity, are known to contain heavy metals and uranium in varying amounts. Some of these elements also occur naturally in the rock beneath the Piedmont. But federal and state rules require no regular testing of ground water near the ponds.

In April, Georgia Power took

four water samples on its property, which were all found to be safe for drinking.

The small UGA study tested 11 wells as well as small airborne dust particles found on 14 road signs near Plant Scherer.

Greater amounts of heavy metals were found on signs in the path of prevailing winds from the plant, the study found. In almost every case, the amount of metals in the dust samples dropped the farther away from the plant the sample was taken. The metal antimony showed the highest correlation with distance from the plant. Breathing high levels of antimony for a long time can cause heart, lung and stomach problems, according to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

"Sampling the air directly is recommended" for a future study, the report states.

Repeatedly the report emphasizes that it cannot draw conclusions about whether pollution found came from Plant Scherer. The tests were done by students, not an accredited lab.

But Gunning was willing to go further.

"The air results confirm what

study after study has shown: Air emissions from Plant Scherer are affecting the Juliette community," he said.

Well water tests

UGA students tested 11 residential wells on Luther Smith Road and U.S. 87 opposite Plant Scherer for the heavy metals boron, chromium, strontium, cobalt, molybdenum, copper, zinc, lead, nickel, arsenic, selenium, barium, cadmium, thallium and antimony.

"We chose heavy metals because they're a physical fingerprint of coal ash," said lead investigator James Bevington, a UGA graduate student.

Two wells had levels of chromium exceeding state and federal safe limits, with the highest measurement almost twice the safe limit, the study reported. Ingesting high levels of chromium may result in anemia or damage to the stomach or intestines, according to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

However, a Georgia Power map showing ground water flow in the area indicates the water flows south and southeast rather than north,

toward Luther Smith Road, or east, toward the portion of U.S. 87 where tests were conducted, the report indicates. Thus, "it is extremely unlikely that the source of these metals was operations at Plant Scherer," the study states.

The study doesn't rule out a connection, however. The well sampling report notes that metals could move upstream, and that Georgia Power's ground water flow information covers only part of the area where wells were tested.

Bevington recommended further well water sampling south of the plant and said a geologic survey would help identify natural sources of heavy metals in the soil and ground water.

Aaron Thompson, UGA assistant professor of environmental science, said one or more of the UGA students are interested in continuing the project, but a source of funding is needed.

Gunning said he hopes the Sierra Club will be able to arrange more well water testing south and southeast of the plant.

"We are committed to working with communities affected by toxic coal-pollution to help residents gain access to necessary informa-

tion to protect their families," Gunning wrote in an e-mail.

Gunning said he was glad the initial water tests came out mostly clean.

"I was really concerned we were going to find a pervasive problem," he said. "Hopefully some people in this area will find a little bit of relief."

Gunning said the UGA report will be shared with state public health officials who plan to conduct a scoping process this month about Plant Scherer's health effects. That process seeks to identify what information is needed to gauge whether the plant could be harming its neighbors, and could lead to a broader public health study related to Scherer.

Both the scoping report and the results of a separate community health survey related to uranium exposure in Monroe County are expected to be complete near the end of June, said Jane Perry, director of the chemical hazards program in the state public health department.

To reach writer S. Heather Duncan, call 744-4225.

PEACH FROM 1B

currently without a league to compete in after Bibb County Schools decided to limit its league to schools within the system. Fort Valley had competed in the Bibb County league for more than a decade.

Previous attempts to put the Fort Valley team in the Central Georgia Middle School Athletic League in which Byron Middle — the district's other middle school — currently competes were unsuccessful, said Peach County athletics director Chad Campbell, saying the only reason he was given was that the league could not take on another team.

About 100 parents and students showed up to the fo-

"It's not recreation. It's a feeder program for varsity action. And we're not going to sit here and say half the kids are going to be from this side and the other half from another. The best kids will be on the team, period."

Peach County athletics director Chad Campbell

rum at the district's board of education building to discuss concerns, such as losing the Byron Middle School colors and mascot, as well as how dance and cheerleading teams would be affected.

"I know it's a dilemma and I know I'm not in a position where I can please everyone, but we're trying to get together and listen to everyone, their questions and concerns and come up with the best solution for every-

one," said Campbell, stressing that all discussion was preliminary and no decisions had been made.

Many parents said their concern was with what would happen with those students who would not make a combined team.

Sports "keeps a lot of kids out of trouble," said Brian Harrelson, adding that the time spent in a supervised sports environment would be replaced with time for kids to possibly get into

drugs or other negative activities. "The main reason I don't want this to happen is for those kids who aren't going to make the team."

The middle school teams are a feeder system to the high school, Campbell said.

"It's not recreation," he said. "It's a feeder program for varsity action. And we're not going to sit here and say half the kids are going to be from this side and the other half from another. The best kids will be on the team, period."

Superintendent Joe Ann Denning said the intent was not to interrupt either school's colors or mascot.

"We're one county. ... This is not a fight issue. We have too many issues to resolve in this county to fight about this one."

INDICT FROM 1B

Bright, the Ocmulgee Circuit district attorney, said Thursday.

Bright presented the case to a grand jury Tuesday. Moss' murder indictment was returned Thursday.

No trial date has been set, but Bright said the case could go to trial by year's end.

Investigators think Coker was killed March 13 when he was in the Macon area to meet Moss, a grant writer and nonprofit manager who was apparently helping Coker set up a charity housing endeavor.

If convicted, Moss could face life in prison without parole.

Moss, accused of fatally poisoning her mother in Ma-

con in 1996, pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter in 1997 and was sent to prison until 2005.

At this point, it doesn't appear prosecutors can seek the death penalty against Moss.

For prosecutors to make a capital case in Georgia, a crime must include one of several aggravating circumstances. One of those circumstances is having a prior murder conviction.

Had Moss been convicted of murdering her 64-year-old mother, Barbara Frye, Moss' alleged hand in Coker's slaying may have made her eligible for the death penalty.

Information from Telegraph archives was used in this report. To contact writer Joe Kovac Jr., call 744-4397.

ANIMAL FROM 1B

day-to-day duties at the shelter.

"We don't need an interim director. We have one," said Anne Brennaman, director of rescue organization Macon Purrs 'N Paws. Brennaman is adamant that VanDeWalker should remain in charge of the shelter.

VanDeWalker is one of several applicants for the permanent director's position, but he is not being considered as an interim director.

Layson said VanDeWalker is his "go-to guy," but Layson still wants to learn more from an outsider before hiring a permanent director.

"You don't just hand the job to someone you've had limited expe-

rience with," he said Thursday.

Brennaman started a Facebook page titled, "Keep Van," after learning of the commission's decision to hire an interim director. Started Tuesday night, the page had nearly 400 Facebook friends as of late Thursday afternoon.

Brennaman said a friend called her with the news Tuesday night.

"She said, 'I know this is going to make you mad, and you're not going to sleep.' I went ballistic," Brennaman said.

Layson said an interim director, which he calls a "consultant," will be hired to provide an outside perspective on issues facing the shelter.

The consultant's purpose, Layson said, is to gather information.

"I think what the commission and myself want to do is step back

and learn more about animal welfare," Layson said, noting that the commission knows little about the shelter.

The consultant, whose contract would be for 60 days, would also serve as director of the shelter for that time period, Layson said.

Brennaman, however, said VanDeWalker has proven himself more than once with the work he has done at the shelter.

"We don't need an outside perspective," she said.

VanDeWalker served as interim director after Johnson was fired last August. Johnson was reinstated in January, but then transferred out of the shelter following news reports of animals there living in squalor. In April, VanDeWalker took over the day-to-day oversight of the shelter.

Last fall, VanDeWalker instituted a pardon week at the shelter, and he has worked closely with animal rights organizations.

Over the past two weeks, the shelter found homes for 85 dogs and 14 cats in advance of a rodent and roach fumigation, something Brennaman said she doesn't think could have been done without VanDeWalker.

Comments on Brennaman's Facebook group advocate writing letters to county commissioners, starting a petition and even protesting.

Brennaman said she has made bumper stickers and will make yard signs. The stickers simply read: "Keep Van."

Tammy Spires, a pet lover and animal rights supporter, said all the animals she has owned are

rescues, and she thinks VanDeWalker has done a wonderful job running the shelter.

"I'm just not understanding their justification for wanting to replace him," she said.

Spires has raised money for the shelter in the past and said she has informed her friends and family about the Facebook movement. She has already e-mailed the commissioners and said she will sign a petition if necessary.

"Anything we can do to get the word out," she said.

Layson said he understands people are passionate about the issue, but he asks for patience.

"We're trying to do the right thing," he said. "Patience is key."

Information from Telegraph archives was used in this report.

GRIS FROM 1B

peace and quiet around the house.

Add that to Rachel's 120-mile daily commute to work, dodging the deer and log trucks from Lake Tobesofkee to Oglethorpe.

GAS is not just something she puts in her car at \$3.14 a gallon. GAS stands for General Adaptation Syndrome. It's a medical term for stress.

Rachel is a woman of many hats. Her author's bio in the back of the Chicken Soup book lists her as a wife, mother, engineer,

inventor, writer, dancer, speaker and life coach.

You can now add a crown to all those hats.

Living under the same roof with five males, Rachel is "queen" of the house. Last Saturday, in her hometown of Vidalia, she was crowned winner of the "Mrs. Fabulous Forties" pageant. It was open to women in their 40s (Rachel is 44), and she will now advance to the state competition. Not surprisingly, she won the "talent" and "formal wear" categories.

Rachel met Johnny at Tuskegee University,

where they were both students. They will celebrate their 22nd anniversary on June 16. That day is also Johnny's 49th birthday.

In 1993, Johnny left his job as a chemical engineer with Proctor & Gamble in Cincinnati to move to Macon for a position with Brown & Williamson. He lost that job in 2004, the year B&W's merger with R.J. Reynolds led to the closure of the Macon plant, which was one of the area's largest employers with 2,100 people.

Rachel has been a processing control engineer at Weyerhaeuser in Macon

County for the past 19 years. She is the family's primary bread-winner.

The financial and emotional strain of Johnny losing his job, going from what she described as a "left-brain thinking engineer to Mr. Mom," combined with all the obligatory heavy lifting expected of her as a wife and mother, began to take a silent toll.

She woke up one morning with muscle tightness and sharp pains in her back and neck. At first, she thought it might be a pinched nerve. She made an appointment with a chi-

ropractor. She later visited a physical therapist. She had X-rays and massage therapy.

She ruled out heart issues or blood pressure problems. She wasn't overweight or a couch potato. In fact, she was an accomplished dancer. (She once wrote a book about her dance ministry.)

She became frustrated at her lack of progress in identifying her problem until she made a self-diagnosis.

It was her ears, so to speak.

Her body was trying to tell her something, and she

wasn't listening.

So she developed a disciplined routine of exercise and relaxation. Rachel now practices "circuits" of weight training and stretching for 35 minutes three times a week. She uses breathing and visualization techniques several times each day. She has also increased her intake of potassium and magnesium, which are recognized for their benefits in maintaining healthy blood-pressure levels.

Rachel helped herself. She hopes her chicken soup recipe will help others.

PERRY FROM 1B

tion for the fiscal year because the position does not hold as much responsibility as it used to, Faircloth said. Ronnie Jones has held the position for five years, and currently earns a salary of \$79,000.

"It will mean that we will have one less department head in a position, but we are not abolishing the position," Faircloth said.

Faircloth said the public works director has been responsible for less since sewer, water and gas has been contracted to ESG Inc. in recent years.

Jones has remained in charge of supervising street maintenance, grass mowing and engineering for projects.

"If council decides to do this, council has considered spreading the balance of the responsibilities to other personnel throughout the city," Fair-

cloth said.

The city has eliminated 17 positions and contracted out 14 others since fiscal year 2009, and officials have constantly said their employees are doing more with less. However, Faircloth said Thursday not all staff members are overloaded.

Jones has been informed of the possible funding elimination. He's been offered a severance package, Faircloth said.

If unfunded this year, Faircloth said City Council would review next fiscal year whether the position is needed.

"We do realize that there may be other responsibilities in that position that will come up," Faircloth said, noting the creation of storm utility districts has been on the horizon for a while.

Faircloth said he wasn't certain what the city policy is on whether Jones would be offered the position straight out or if he would have to join the pool

of applicants.

The mayor said the elimination of the position for fiscal 2013 is not to balance the budget. He said city officials have been privately discussing the defunding for about 18 months.

"When you have a fiscal year end and start, it's as good a time as any to make changes to personnel," Faircloth said.

If the funds are not used for the public works director, they will be shifted back into the general fund.

City Manager Lee Gilmour proposed funding a part-time clerical position for the police department because they have presented a need, Faircloth said.

He added that the funding for that position would not cost the entire \$79,000 left behind by Jones' departure.

To contact writer Christina M. Wright, call 256-9685.

BEATING FROM 1B

Warner Robins police officers were called to Pop's Food Mart, 514 North Davis Drive, at 9:19 p.m. Monday after a report that two men were fighting in front of the store. They found Admin there injured but the other man was gone.

Police spokeswoman Tabitha Pugh said Wednesday afternoon detectives are making good progress in the investigation.

"We've got some extremely strong leads we are following up on at this moment," Pugh said.

She said detectives are still trying to determine whether it was a robbery.

Pop's Food Mart is a separate business located in the same building with J.B.s Liquor Store.

Jack Patel, owner of J.B.'s Liquor, said he isn't sure what started the fight but he did not think it was a robbery. He said Admin has operated the store for four years. It has been closed since the incident.

"He was a really good person," Patel said.

To contact writer Wayne Crenshaw, call 256-9725.

Water testing for uranium expanding in Juliette

By S. HEATHER DUNCAN
hduncan@macon.com

New water testing is under way in the Juliette area, where radioactive uranium contamination has been found in some residential wells.

University of Georgia graduate students are testing additional homes' wells for heavy metals, and the Georgia Department of Public Health is starting broader radioactivity sampling Thursday at wells known to contain uranium or radon.

Tests in the last few years have revealed unsafe levels of these elements in well water or high levels of radon in the air of some

SEE URANIUM, 8A

ELECTION 2012

3 vie to replace Richardson in District 3

By PHILLIP RAMATI
pramati@macon.com

In the race to replace longtime Bibb County Commissioner Elmo Richardson, the three Republican candidates are either touting their political experience — or lack thereof.

Gary Bechtel, Ed Bond and Mallory Jones are seeking the District 3 seat to replace Richardson, who decided not to seek re-election. Richardson endorsed Bechtel last week.

Bechtel and Bond both pointed to their long years of political service as assets if

SEE RACE, 3A

Bibb County Commission District 3 Candidates



Gary Bechtel
Age: 51
Party: Republican
Occupation: Commercial asset manager
Political experience: Chairman, Bibb County Republican Party, 1990; Republican appointee, Bibb County Board of Elections from 1994-99; appointee to the state's Professional Standards Committee from 2003-06; Bibb County Board of Education, District 6, 2000-present.



Ed Bond
Age: 77
Party: Republican
Occupation: Retired
Political experience: Macon city councilman from 1970-74; Bibb County coroner from 1991-2005.



Mallory Jones III
Age: 65
Party: Republican
Occupation: Realtor
Political experience: None



GRANT BLANKENSHIP/gblankenship@macon.com

The Bright Star Learning Center facility on Mount Pleasant Church Road in south Bibb County is one of about 3,500 properties whose owners are protesting a hike in their assessed value and the property taxes that flow from that.

Thousands appeal property values

Bibb's highest concentrations of increases are in neighborhoods near Middle Georgia Regional Airport and off Vineville

By LIZ BIBB
lbibb@macon.com

About 70,000 Bibb County property owners received tax assessment notices in May, and not surprisingly, not everyone was pleased with the result.

The Board of Tax Assessors received almost 3,400 appeals of assessments this year, said Andrea Crutchfield, chief appraiser for Bibb County.

That's about 1,400 fewer than the 4,800 last year.

The board generally receives more appeals when property values go up, Crutchfield said, because higher property values generally mean higher taxes.

This year, "most (values) either stayed the same or went down," she said.

The highest concentrations of increased property assessments were

in neighborhoods near the Middle Georgia Regional Airport and off Vineville Avenue. Most of the lower assessments were in neighborhoods in east and south Macon, but Crutchfield said there were decreases across the county.

Emily Schroeder, co-owner and director of Bright Star Learning Center

SEE PROPERTY, 8A

THE RAIL

YOUR NEWS EXPRESS

Chalkboards are the new accents in home decor

LIVING, 1D



Ellis Island exhibit coming to Atlanta

A replica of a 1938 mural from Ellis Island is the highlight of an exhibit opening July 21 at the National Archives at Atlanta.

The 1938 Works Progress Administration mural by Edward Laning adorned the dining hall at the famed Ellis Island, N.Y., where over 12 million immigrants first set foot in America from 1892 to 1954. Its eight panels portrayed the founding and building of America by pioneers from different countries, according to a news release.

The archives are open to the public Tuesdays through Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call (770) 968-2500 or visit www.archives.gov/southeast.

— Staff reports

TO OUR READERS: Do you have questions on consolidation, T-SPLOST?

Do you have specific questions about Macon-Bibb County consolidation or the regional transportation sales tax referendums? Please e-mail your questions to Mike Stucka at mstucka@macon.com, and include your name, phone number and hometown.

Kellie Pickler, Joe Nichols to perform at Georgia National Fair

Country music artists Kellie Pickler and Joe Nichols will perform for the Oct. 6 concert at this year's Georgia National Fair, officials announced Wednesday.

The concert will take place at 7:30 p.m. in Reeves Arena. Tickets go on sale Aug. 25, online only. The cost is \$25.

Pickler rose to fame as a contestant on the fifth season of television's "American Idol." Her hits include "Red High Heels" and "I Wonder." Nichols' chart-toppers include songs such as "Brokenheartsville" and "Tequila Makes Her Clothes Fall Off."

This year's fair will be held Oct. 4-14 at the Georgia National Fairgrounds in Perry. Fair officials previously announced that pop-rock band Hot Chelle Rae and Allstar Weekend would perform Oct. 13.

— Staff reports



Flaws in FBI forensics prompt review

Thousands of cases now being examined: Justice had known about problems for years

By SPENCER S. HSU
The Washington Post

The Justice Department and FBI have launched a review of thousands of criminal cases to determine whether any defendants were wrongly convicted or deserve a new trial because of flawed forensic evidence, officials said Tuesday.

The undertaking is the largest post-conviction review ever done by the FBI. It will include cases conducted by all FBI Laboratory hair and fiber examiners since at least 1985 and may reach earlier if records are

SEE FORENSICS, 3A



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WEATHER, 8C

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URANIUM FROM 1A

Juliette homes. Digesting uranium can cause kidney dysfunction, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Airborne radon, which can seep into homes through tiny cracks in the foundation, is the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers, the EPA says.

Juliette residents now rely on well water for drinking, although Monroe County is seeking a grant to help extend water lines to the area with the help of special purpose local option sales tax proceeds.

Since winter, the state public health department has been studying the uranium problem, as well whether some water contamination problems in Juliette might be related to a neighboring coal-fired power plant. The department is expected to release a “scoping report” on the possible health impacts of Georgia Power’s Plant Scherer within the next few days.

Uranium occurs naturally in the bedrock of the Piedmont region. Uranium and other heavy metals can also be a byproduct of burning some types of coal.

Preliminary results are now available from a public health survey conducted in February and March. Juliette area residents were asked to report on their health and health problems, focusing mostly on uranium and radon exposure.

Survey results

Jane Perry, program director for the department’s chemical hazards program, said preliminary health survey results do not indicate any clusters of illnesses or symptoms. The exception is that almost half of respondents reported high blood pressure.

About a quarter of respondents reported breathing or other respiratory problems.

Fewer than 10 reported cancer diagnoses, and only two were under age 50, Perry said. The kinds of cancer reported varied, and they tended to be the most common types.

Of the 52 survey participants, only about half had tested their well water for uranium, Perry said. She emphasized that all Juliette-area residents need to test their water for uranium.

About half of those whose water had been tested found more uranium than the government considers safe, Perry said.

Public health officials are in the process of analyzing the surveys geographically and for multiple factors. Final results are expected by the end of July, and participants who provided their addresses will receive a brief summary of the results.

Although the state’s analysis of the responses is wrapping up, Perry said the state has decided to reopen the survey period until Sept. 1 to get more data. Perry said the survey will be re-posted online at the end of the week at www.health.state.ga.us/programs/hazards.

Juliette resident Donna Welch expressed surprise that the surveys haven’t shown patterns in health problems among her neighbors, because she has heard multiple people complain of skin irritations, nosebleeds, scalp sores, and respiratory and kidney problems. But she also said she knows many people who never returned their surveys this spring.

“I think it’s great they’re giving people a second chance to do the survey,” said Welch, whose well water has more



Donna Welch talks last year about how she switched to bottled water for drinking rather than drinking water from her well, which was found to have over 20 times the safe limits for uranium. Welch, who lives near Plant Scherer, expressed surprise that preliminary results from surveys during February and March haven’t shown more health problems among her neighbors.

than 20 times the safe limit for uranium. She has become a community activist, encouraging neighbors to get their water tested, too.

New water testing

The federal Environmental Protection Agency has offered free testing on wells where uranium or radon has already been identified, Perry said. These tests will check for a broader array of radioactive isotopes. The samples will be taken through July by public health workers and analyzed at an EPA lab.

Dana Lynch, the Monroe County cooperative extension agent, said that more than 700 Monroe County residents have now had their water tested for uranium. Of those, 34 were above the safe level, and 53 more had detectable levels of uranium.

So far, 23 homeowners have taken the offer for more extensive testing, but Perry said she expects even more. Resources are available to conduct 50 of the tests, but Perry said the state could probably find the resources to squeeze in more if there is interest.

Welch is one of the residents whose water will be tested Thursday. She said she is curious whether the drought may concentrate the contamination and whether her well contains unusu-

al radioactive isotopes. She already knows it is tainted not only with uranium but radon, and the family switched to bottled water a year ago.

Radon in water can become breathable when water turns to steam, so Welch’s family must open the windows every time someone showers — not a cheap proposition in summer heat.

Some University of Georgia graduate students are conducting separate water tests for heavy metals at other residential wells in the vicinity of Plant Scherer. Perry said she expects the results to be provided to the Georgia Department of Public Health afterward.

UGA students conducted about a dozen of these tests earlier this spring at the request of the Sierra Club, which had been contacted for help by some Juliette residents who live nearest to Plant Scherer. Those residents were concerned that the plant or its unlined coal ash pond were causing or worsening local water contamination.

Initial samples taken at homes nearest the 750-acre coal ash pond found just a few cases of slight metals contamination, according to the report released last month by the UGA researchers. But those wells were north and east of the plant and its pond, and the report recommended further testing to the south and southeast because that is the direction of groundwater flow.

In the meanwhile, Monroe County officials await news on a grant before proceeding with water line extensions to the affected area.

Chan Layson, senior government services specialist for the Middle Georgia Regional Commission, said he expects to hear by September whether Monroe County will receive a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant to provide water service to residents of Old Dames Ferry Road.

If the county receives the grant, it would likely sell bonds to afford extending pipes across the county first, allowing others with contaminated water to tap on, said county administrator Anita Cauthen. The county would likely pay off the bonds using the proceeds from a SPLOST that begins in 2014.

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PROPERTY FROM 1A

in the southern part of the county, filed an appeal because she contends the value of the day care center should be lower based on property values in the surrounding area.

There are unsold houses and vacant properties near her center, she said, and plans for new businesses that potentially could raise values have not come to fruition.

Based on the day care’s tax assessment, Schroeder said her property taxes would increase from about \$22,000 to \$28,000.

The business’ property value went up more than \$100,000, from \$746,410 last year to \$875,477 this year.

Schroeder said she is concerned the higher property taxes will force her to raise prices.

“We’re not the type of business that makes a huge profit,” she said. “We have to have a certain amount of money to even survive.”

Macon City Councilman Rick Hutto also appealed his assessment.

Hutto, who lives in the Shirley Hills neighborhood, said the assessed value of his home rose by almost \$50,000 this year.

Hutto said some houses in this neighborhood aren’t selling, so he thinks the increase in his assessed value is out of line with property values of homes near him.

“I really want to see what they have to substantiate their numbers,” he said. “I don’t think there’s anything to support it.”

When the board receives an appeal, it notifies the prop-

erty owner of its decision within 180 days.

If the board does not change the value, the appeal goes directly to the Board of Equalization.

If the board changes the value and the property owner still disagrees, the owner can file another appeal to the Board of Equalization within 30 days.

If still unhappy, the owner can then appeal to Superior Court.

The number of appeals received this year by the Board of Tax Assessors pales in comparison to the 18,000 appeals the board received in 2009.

That number was on the heels of a revaluation that began in 2007 in which every property in Bibb County was physically examined and evaluated.

In 2007, some properties had not been evaluated in almost 10 years, so almost all property values increased, she said.

“Now we are required to send everyone an assessment notice every year,” Crutchfield said. “We are trying to do more looking at everything every year.”

Every piece of property is not examined each year. Instead, the board looks at sales trends in neighborhoods and focuses on areas that are experiencing unusual patterns.

Crutchfield said the board welcomes appeals because it strives for accuracy in assessing property values.

“It’s a good thing because there could be something we have wrong,” she said.

To contact writer Liz Bibb, call 744-4425.

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PLANT SCHERER HEALTH REPORT

Report finds no evidence plant contaminates groundwater

State health officials recommend further tests on home wells

By S. HEATHER DUNCAN
hduncan@macon.com

The Georgia Department of Public Health released a “scoping report” late last week that gathered available research about the possible health impacts of Plant Scherer on its Monroe County neighbors.

The report found that groundwater contamination near the plant from uranium and other heavy metals probably occurs naturally. But because there is little data available, it calls for further residential well water testing.

The report also says that public health officials will consult with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and other experts about modeling and sampling that could help determine “whether a potential air exposure pathway exists at levels of health concern.”

The report was compiled after some Juliette-area residents voiced fears about health risks posed by the plant or its unlined coal ash pond, both of which are among the largest in

SEE REPORT, 6A



GRANT BLANKENSHIP/blankenship@macon.com

Plant Scherer’s unlined coal ash pond has been speculated to cause groundwater contamination, but a Georgia Department of Public Health report has stated any contamination prognanly occurs naturally.

“The limited data available do not indicate that humans are being or have been exposed to levels of contamination that would be expected to cause adverse health effects.”

Georgia Department of Public Health scoping report

Scherer report omits student study results

By S. HEATHER DUNCAN
hduncan@macon.com

A “scoping report” by the state Department of Public Health includes all previous research about the possible health effects of Monroe County’s Plant Scherer — except for the results of a small air and water study conducted this spring by University of Georgia students at the request of the Sierra Club.

Before finalizing the report on one of the largest coal-fired power plants in the country, state officials

removed the UGA study. Ryan Deal, director of communications for the public health department, said this was because the study was part of a class project and did not meet the same level of scientific rigor as the other research in the report.

“We look at the scientific viability of the data,” said Scott Uhlich, the state environmental health director, noting that the results weren’t analyzed by a certified lab.

The students checked for

SEE STUDY, 6A



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Cheryl Miller, facilities maintenance manager at the Little League Southeastern Regional field, rakes the third-base line Friday as she and others work to get the facility ready for the regional tournament beginning this week. Miller grew up in Williamsport, Pa., home of the Little League World Series, and after many summers doing work on the field there decided to pursue a career that led her to the Southern Regional field. “We’re trying to get this field identical to the big show up there,” she said.

Little League Southeast preps for regional games

By ANGELA WOOLEN
awoolen@macon.com

WARNER ROBINS — Most days Cheryl Miller gets to the fields at Little League Southeast Park at 8 a.m. and leaves at 6 p.m., and some days it’s later than that.

Friday afternoon, Miller, the new facilities maintenance manager, raked dirt at home plate, while Peter Frik-

ker, the assistant director of the Little League Southeastern Regional, swept the warning track nearby.

“I started July 9 and haven’t had a day off yet,” Miller said.

Preparations were in full swing last week as the staff prepared for its first batch of regional games for the 11- and 12-year-old softball tournament. Teams from South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Ala-

bama, Florida and North Carolina arrive Wednesday, with the first games scheduled for Thursday. Bibb County’s own Western Little League will represent Georgia.

Although new to the state, Miller worked at Little League’s headquarters in Williamsport, Pa., from 2005-10 as the head groundskeeper.

SEE REGIONAL, 6A

Pennsylvania’s strict voter ID law faces ACLU lawsuit

By DAVID G. SAVAGE
Tribune Washington Bureau

PHILADELPHIA — At age 93, Viviette Applewhite proudly lives on her own in a high-rise apartment just a few blocks from where she was born. A widow, she has never driven a car, but she has had many jobs, including work as a welder during World War II. She

marched with Martin Luther King Jr. in Georgia.

She cast her first vote for President Franklin D. Roosevelt. On Election Day four years ago, Applewhite went across the street to vote. “I was waiting there when they opened the door,” she said. “I didn’t vote for (Barack) Obama because he was black. I voted for him because

he was a Democrat.”

But this fall, her record of faithfully voting for Democrats may come to an end, thanks to a strict voter identification law adopted this year by Pennsylvania’s Republican-controlled Legislature. Now she is the lead plaintiff in a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union challenging the

new law.

She is among more than 186,000 registered voters, many of them minorities, in this heavily Democratic city who do not drive. As such, they may lack the valid photo identification card now required at the polls, which might not be easy to

SEE VOTERS, 6A

THE RAIL

YOUR NEWS EXPRESS

COMING TOMORROW

Consolidation

Other Georgia cities provide examples for law enforcement consolidation.

Jay’s HOPE families enjoy Lane Southern Orchards

LOCAL & STATE, 3A

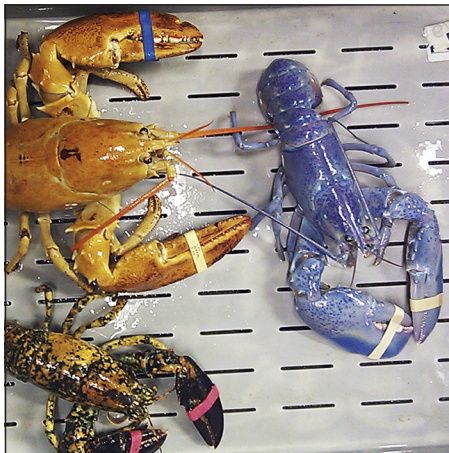
Lobstermen finding more odd colors in the catch

Reports of odd-colored lobsters used to be rare in the lobster fishing grounds of New England and Atlantic Canada. Normal lobsters are a mottled greenish-brown.

But in recent years, accounts of bright blue, orange, yellow, calico, white and even split lobsters — one color on one side, another on the other — have jumped. It’s now common to hear several stories a month of a lobsterman bringing one of the quirky crustaceans to shore.

It’s anybody’s guess why more oddities are popping up in lobster traps, said Michael Tlusty, research director at the New England Aquarium in Boston.

— Associated Press



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Amilcar Lopez rakes the warning track at the Little League Southeastern Regional field.

REGIONAL FROM 1A

With the difference in weather and grass from Pennsylvania to Georgia, Miller said she has had to learn on her feet how to make the fields look good.

“I’ll have it as identical to Lamade as I can field-wise,” Miller said, comparing the Southeast fields to Howard J. Lamade Stadium in Williamsport, where the Little League World Series is held.

In addition to prepping the fields, Little League officials also are readying volunteers.

The number of people interested in helping during the regional increased from last year.

About 100 to 120 people, up from about 75 last year, attended a July 19 volunteer meeting, said Jimmy Autry, a volunteer.

“Volunteers help us run the tournament better,” said Frikker, who was encouraged by the turnout now that the tournament is in its third year.

Spectators can expect some changes at the tournament. Pop-up tents will not be allowed to be left up overnight and must be taken down every day, Frikker said.

Depending on the crowds, there is talk of having a concession stand on the hill, but nothing will be determined until later in the tournament.

With the Guardian Centers, a training center for emergency personnel, being constructed at the corner of Snellgrove and Cohen Walker drives, Frikker expects to lose a few parking spots. But police will ensure there is still enough parking available, he said.

Golf carts and a pedestrian path will be used again this year to help people get from their cars to the stadium.

Wilola Lee, a 60-year-old former school employee, has made three unsuccessful trips to the Department of Transportation. She has a small pile of identification cards, including a voter registration card and her former school ID, which is now outdated. She was told she needed to show her birth certificate, but since she was born at home in rural Georgia, she was unable to obtain one.

VOTERS FROM 1A

obtain. (A valid driver’s license is acceptable voter ID.)

In March, Pennsylvania became the ninth state to require voters to show a particular photo identification card. Similar new laws in Texas, South Carolina and Wisconsin have been blocked by the Justice Department or by state judges.

This week, lawyers for Applewhite and nine other longtime voters will ask a state judge in Harrisburg to halt the photo ID law as a denial of the fundamental right to vote. The outcome of the lawsuit could affect not just the voting rights of several hundred thousand Pennsylvanians but also who wins the presidential election.

When the voter ID bill was being debated, state officials assured Pennsylvania legislators its impact would be minimal. Only 1 percent of its voters — or about 89,000 people — did not have the required ID, they said.

The new law says a proper ID card must be issued by the government or a nursing home, and it must contain a name, photo and expiration date. Those who do not have such a card and have not driven before must go to a state driver’s license office and present four forms of identification, such as a birth certificate and Social Security card.

On July 3, state officials sent out a news release to “confirm the vast majority of registered voters have the identification that can be used for voting.” But its own analysis of state driving records revealed that 9 percent of those on its voting rolls — 758,939 in all — could not be found in the state Department of Transportation database. In Philadelphia alone, about 18 percent did not have the proper identification, according to this analysis.

Obama almost certainly needs to win in Pennsylvania to be re-elected, and political analysts say the Democrat cannot win the state without piling up large margins in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, the two cities where the new voter ID rule would hit the hardest.

“If the election were held today, we would have more than 100,000 of our voters who could not vote,” said Stephanie Singer, chairwoman of Philadelphia’s elections commission. “It’s a cynical attempt by the Republican leadership to steal the election. And absolutely, it could sway the outcome.”

That view of the law’s importance is not unique to Democrats. Last month, state House Republican leader Mike Turzai, who represents the north suburbs of Pittsburgh, ticked off this year’s accomplishments before a meeting of state Republicans. “Voter ID, which is going to allow Governor (Mitt) Romney to win the state of Pennsylvania: Done,” he said.

“His message was that only citizens and registered voters should be allowed to vote,” said Stephen Miskin, a spokesman for Turzai. “For the first time in a long time, this (law) means there will be a relatively

level playing field because election fraud in Pennsylvania will be curtailed.”

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett, a Republican, said the July 3 report did not mean 758,000 voters lacked the proper identification. Some of them may have moved or died, or they may have other acceptable identification such as a U.S. passport or a military identification card, he said.

“I encourage people of Pennsylvania who do not have a photo ID for voter ID to go get one. And we’re trying to make it as easy as we can,” he told the Los Angeles Times. “There’s a huge voter education effort going on.”

To obtain a voter ID, most Pennsylvanians will need to visit an office of the state Department of Transportation — sometimes more than once. The requirement for a card with an expiration date has tripped up many, including municipal employees, state college students and veterans, whose photo ID cards usually do not have expiration dates.

Corbett said many of the state’s universities were updating their ID cards to comply with the law. Nursing homes and assisted-living centers are authorized to make photo ID cards for their residents, he noted.

City election officials, however, are not authorized to do the same. “We would love to go through the neighborhoods with a mobile van and a camera and help registered voters get a valid ID. But we are not authorized to issue IDs,” Singer said. “We have to tell people to go to Penn DOT.”

Wilola Lee, a 60-year-old former school employee, has made three unsuccessful trips to the Department of Transportation. She has a small pile of identification cards, including a voter registration card and her former school ID, which is now outdated. She was told she needed to show her birth certificate, but since she was born at home in rural Georgia, she was unable to obtain one.

Frustrated, she joined the lawsuit. “I have voted my entire life. Never missed. And I’m really upset they are trying to stop me from voting this time,” she said.

Applewhite also has a thick wad of identification cards, including from Medicare and her bank and a voter registration card. She has a city transit pass with her photo, but it is not deemed acceptable under the law. After many inquiries, she obtained a copy of her birth certificate through the mail.

But she was then told she had a problem because her name on the birth certificate did not match her married name on her other ID cards.

“I never had a problem with voting before this. If they wanted my Social Security number, I know it by heart,” she said. She says she is determined to obtain the proper identification, no matter how many times she must travel by bus to the Department of Transportation.

“A lot of people in this building don’t have the right ID, and they have given up. I see them in the elevator and I tell them: ‘You’ve got to keep trying,’” she said.

REPORT FROM 1A

the country. The plant is operated and partly owned by Georgia Power.

Georgia Power spokesman Mark Williams said the company will be providing comments on the report to the state public health department this week. Georgia Power officials saw the draft of the report before it was finalized, he said, but did not suggest changes. Robert Uhlich, the state environmental health director, said the report is final and the company’s comments won’t affect it.

During the past 18 months, dozens of Juliette residents have found unsafe levels of radioactive uranium and radon in their well water or elevated radon levels in the air of their homes. Digesting uranium can cause kidney dysfunction, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Airborne radon, which can seep into homes through tiny cracks in the foundation, is the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers, the EPA says.

Uranium (and radon, which is created when uranium breaks down) is common in the underground rocks of the Piedmont region, the report notes.

But coal ash, a by-product of burning coal to make electricity, also concentrates the heavy metals and uranium contained in the source coal.

The scoping report indicates that there is not enough information available for the health department to determine whether illnesses are happening as a result of exposure to contaminants in air or water near the plant.

“The limited data available do not indicate that humans are being or have been exposed to levels of contamination that would be expected to cause adverse health effects,” the report states.

The report also states that when additional groundwater data become available, the state will conduct a “health consultation” — a thorough investigation of an environmental exposure route, in this case groundwater. State health officials will produce a document detailing all available groundwater sampling results, plus health outcome data and community concerns, said Jane Perry, program director for the department’s chemical hazards program.

Additional groundwater data will likely come from well water tests being conducted at an EPA lab for radioactive isotopes of uranium and radium, as well as any other reliable water test results that come in, Uhlich said.

The health consultation will combine that information with health outcome data, such as the results of a community health survey the public health department has conducted related to uranium and radon, Perry said. While initial survey results are being analyzed now, the

The report focuses more on groundwater contamination, which is a known problem in the area, than on air pollution.

department plans to soon reopen the survey to get more responses.

The consultation would also include information culled from a state database that tracks the incidence of certain diseases and treatments, such as cancer diagnoses or emergency room visits related to kidney problems, Perry said.

Uhlich said the consultation will likely be completed early next year.

Types of pollution

The report states that at the time of the 2010 Census, 1,385 people in 582 households were living within a mile of the perimeter of Plant Scherer, including 248 women of child-bearing age, 206 elderly people and 120 children younger than age 6.

The report focuses more on groundwater contamination, which is a known problem in the area, than on air pollution. It notes that Georgia Power is in the process of adding more pollution controls to reduce its output of ozone-forming gases and mercury. But it does not really address fine particle pollution, another major form of air pollution that can cause heart and lung problems.

Perry said this is partly because detailed information about that would require sophisticated monitoring and wind modeling. That would probably have to be supplied by the EPA or another federal partner, she said. The closest fine particle pollution monitor is 20 miles away in Macon.

The report states that residents concerned about air pollution from the plant should contact the state Environmental Protection Division or their physician.

Seth Gunning, with the Sierra Club, said he thought the air pollution from the plant received short shrift in the report.

“That was the one thing I was a little taken aback by,” he said.

He said the Sierra Club provided ample research to the public health department about the effects of air pollution, particularly fine particles, from burning coal.

“It’s a very well-researched topic,” he said. “And for people who live around Plant Scherer, it’s very obvious that some kind of particulate matter is coming onto people’s properties.”

New information on environmental sampling

Public health officials compiling the scoping report received a tour of Plant Scherer from Georgia Power officials and reviewed groundwater sampling data the plant has submitted to regulators.

Neither the state nor the federal government requires

groundwater sampling around the unlined coal ash pond, but sampling is required around a landfill Georgia Power built in 2009 to hold mostly wet gypsum, another by-product of energy generation at the plant. The report indicates there has been regular water sampling at 20 locations around the gypsum storage area, which is south of the coal ash pond and appears to be in the trajectory of groundwater flowing from beneath the pond.

Steve McManus, an advanced geologist in the EPD industrial waste unit, said, “The data from the landfill monitoring system may be somewhat useful, but I don’t think it would be appropriate to draw conclusions from it with confidence as you could if you had a monitoring system designed for the coal ash pond.”

Early rounds of sampling at the landfill wells found that the amount of 13 heavy metals, such as vanadium and lead, were within Georgia’s standards for safe drinking water, the scoping report states.

The wells are now tested twice a year, said Mike Kemp, manager of the EPD industrial solid waste unit. The most recent samples were in compliance.

Georgia Power spokeswoman Valerie Hendrickson said the company also monitors three drinking water wells on the plant property for inorganic metals and other man-made contaminants every three years.

Surface water points around the gypsum landfill are monitored semiannually for some contaminants, and surface water is also checked for inorganic and organic pollutants every five years as part of the company’s wastewater discharge permit, she said.

(More frequent surface water monitoring also occurs for water characteristics such as temperature and acidity, and more frequent groundwater monitoring covers bacteriological and other contaminants such as lead, Hendrickson said. These types of contamination have not been widely reported in Juliette wells.)

The scoping report summarizes other environmental sampling, studies and test results. Among them, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division’s environmental radiation program sampled five drinking water wells on Georgia Power property around the plant. The samples were tested for gross alpha particles and radioactivity.

One sample taken at Dames Ferry Park on Lake Juliette found both, but in amounts far less than the amount the government considers unsafe, the report states.

To contact writer S. Heather Duncan, call 744-4225.

STUDY FROM 1A

— but did not find — clusters of heavy metal contamination in well water. State health department officials found the study’s air pollution testing inconclusive.

The exclusion of the data didn’t change the state’s recommendations or conclusions, Uhlich said.

Before the report was finalized, Jane Perry, program director for the department’s chemical hazards program, had said the same students were conducting additional sampling this summer that would be the basis for her department’s next step: a health consultation.

She noted the need for samples to be taken both upstream and downstream of groundwater flow from the plant, because this would clarify naturally occurring levels of heavy metals compared with anything the plant’s large coal ash pond might be contributing.

Uhlich said the health consultation would include results from current Environmental Protection Agency tests for radiological contaminants. He said if UGA student samples this summer turn up contamination problems or patterns, then that could indicate the need for someone else to pursue a formal research project with scientifically val-

id protocols and certified lab testing.

UGA researcher James Bevington said in any e-mail that graduate students will continue groundwater sampling through September.

He and Seth Gunning with the Sierra Club said the club is not involved in the project this time.

Gunning said he would like to know why the existing UGA research was left out of the scoping report.

Uhlich said the exclusion of the results had nothing to do with the Sierra Club’s involvement.

Some residents whose well water was tested as part of the study said at the time that they did not feel they could trust the UGA results because they believed Georgia Power had too much influence at the university.

The founding dean of the UGA College of Public Health, Phillip Williams, holds the Georgia Power Professorship of Environmental Health Science. He is also one of nine members of the board that governs the Georgia Department of Public Health, along with Robert Harshman, the medical director for Georgia Power and its parent company, Southern Co.

To contact writer S. Heather Duncan, call 744-4225.

More drugs recalled in midstate

Pharmaceuticals linked to company at center of meningitis probe

By AMY LEIGH WOMACK
awomack@macon.com

More potentially contaminated drugs produced by a Massachusetts company linked to a national fungal meningitis outbreak are being recalled from

ALSO
■ How did the drugs get contaminated at the Massachusetts compounding facility? **3A**

10 Middle Georgia health facilities, said Jennifer Jones, a North Central Health District spokeswoman.

All drugs produced by New England Compounding Center in Framington, Mass., have been recalled, according to an advisory issued Wednesday by the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration.

Earlier this month, Forsyth Street Orthopaedic Ambulatory Surgery Center notified 184 patients that they’d received possibly tainted steroid injections.

Now, the Macon doctors office is making plans to notify patients who received three additional drugs being recalled, said Dr. Frank Kelly of the

SEE DRUGS, 3A

Dudley remembered for civil rights leadership

By PHILLIP RAMATI
pramati@macon.com

Margaret Dudley carried scars both seen and unseen from her days on the front lines of the civil rights movement.

A Macon native, she considered the marks on her legs as badges of honor from the marches and demonstrations she joined in over the years.

“She was a mother figure to so many of us,” said Elaine Lucas, a Macon City Council member. “She always showed us the dog bites on her legs to let us know that we still had things we needed to fight for.”

Dudley died of congestive heart failure Sunday



Margaret Dudley

“She marched in Montgomery, Selma, Sandersville, Wrightsville, Atlanta. ... She was a giant, one of the unsung heroes of the civil rights movement.”

State Rep. Tyrone Brooks, D-Atlanta

SEE DUDLEY, 3A

Scherer lawsuit planned

Upcoming public meeting aimed at signing up clients who may have suffered health problems, property damage from unlined coal ash pond



GRANT BLANKENSHIP/gblankenship@macon.com

Plant Scherer is seen across an ash pond in 2006. Lawyers plan to pursue a lawsuit against plant co-owner Georgia Power, claiming damage to health and property from the unlined coal ash pond in Monroe County.

“One of the things I find interesting is that much of the power being generated in Georgia is going to Florida, and Florida wouldn’t allow this plant. We do not want this coal plant to be shut down. We want it to be done safely and monitored.”

Marc Bern, who would be one of the lead attorneys on the Scherer cases

By S. HEATHER DUNCAN
hduncan@macon.com

A Macon legal team is partnering with a high-profile New York law firm to pursue lawsuits against Georgia Power, claiming damage to health and property from a huge, unlined coal ash pond in Monroe County.

The firms are advertising an upcoming public meeting to sign up clients who live near Plant Scherer, one of the country’s largest coal-fired power plants.

More than 1,000 pounds of toxic coal ash from the plant is put into the

pond daily, making the pond one of a handful in the country receiving the highest amount of heavy metals along with ash, according to the federal Toxic Release Inventory.

Dozens of residents of the nearby town of Juliette have found unsafe levels of uranium in their well water or airborne radon in their homes. Some of them have been diagnosed with uranium poisoning. Uranium occurs naturally in the underground rocks of the Piedmont region, but coal ash also concentrates heavy metals and uranium contained in

SEE SCHERER, 6A

Houston man dies from West Nile

Son calls for greater public awareness

By JENNIFER BURK
jburk@macon.com

A Houston County man diagnosed with West Nile virus died Tuesday at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, his son said.

Charles Hendrix, a retired chief master sergeant in the Air Force who served in the Vietnam and Gulf wars, was 65, son Dustin Hendrix said.

For Hendrix, his father’s death underscores the need for greater public aware-

Tips for preventing West Nile virus

- Avoid outdoor activity at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes carrying the virus are most likely to bite.
- Reduce the amount of exposed skin by wearing loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and pants.
- Wear an insect repellent containing DEET.
- Empty containers of standing water, which can be breeding grounds for mosquitoes.

Source: North Central Health District

SEE NILE, 5A

ELECTION 2012

League of Women Voters forum focuses on Bibb commission races

By RODNEY MANLEY
rmanley@macon.com

Bibb County Commission Chairman Sam Hart touted the passage of the \$191 million SPLOST referendum a year ago as one his biggest accomplishments. His challenger, Tom Wagoner, characterized it as a shortcoming.

“There’s a big difference in the word ‘work’ and the word ‘job,’” Wagoner said Tuesday at a forum sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Macon at the Brickyard at Riverside Golf Club. “There’s not a single job in here.”

Hart answered that \$6 million from the sales tax proceeds earmarked to address encroachment issues with Robins Air Force Base

in south Bibb “saved hundreds of jobs.” And, he noted, the \$6 million in SPLOST funds for economic development helped land the \$50 million Tractor Supply Co. distribution center under construction in the I-75 Business Park — and its 200 new jobs.

Hart also touted consolidation and a service delivery strategy reached with the city as other top accomplishments under his leadership.

“We’ve got some things out there that sat around and didn’t get done because of bickering and a lot of other things,” he said. “We’ve done some things that can make a real difference.”

Sales tax revenue, Wagoner said, would

SEE LEAGUE, 5A



BEAU CABELL/bcabell@macon.com

U.S. Rep. Sanford Bishop answers a question about the size of the federal budget deficit before leaving a League of Women Voters luncheon at The Brickyard on Wednesday. The 10-term representative, now 71st in seniority in the House, said that was one of the reasons he’s on the Appropriations Committee.



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SCHERER FROM 1A

the source coal.

Brian Adams, a partner in Macon's Gautreaux & Adams law practice, said he has been talking with potential clients, but none has officially signed on. He said the firms are not pursuing a class action suit but a "mass tort." That means each case would be filed separately, although multiple cases might rely on the same discovery process for evidence.

Adams used to own a side business renting canoes and kayaks on the Ocmulgee River and is helping lead an effort to expand the Ocmulgee National Monument into a national park. He said he has long had a personal interest in Middle Georgia's environment and expects to begin filing suits before the end of the year.

The New York law firm involved is a heavy hitter nationally in environmental and personal injury cases. Napoli Bern Ripka Shkolnik & Associates LLP is representing a group of victims of the recent Colorado theater shootings, as well as property owners nationwide who have been harmed by natural gas "fracking."

The firm won an \$850 million settlement on behalf of 10,000 recovery workers who were exposed to environmental contamination after the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, said Marc Bern, who would be one of the lead attorneys on the Scherer cases.

Bern said he has been approached about other cases related to coal ash ponds since 2008, when a huge coal ash pond spill in Tennessee triggered the federal Environmental Protection Agency to reconsider its coal ash rules. (New rules still haven't been issued, although the EPA is considering reclassifying coal ash as a hazardous waste.)

"Coal ash is very controversial," Bern said. "I have looked at coal ash cases and haven't found one — until this one — that I was willing to litigate."

What made this case compelling, he said, is that Georgia Power has been dumping coal ash waste in an unlined pit ("which really to me is outrageous") for more than 30 years without any groundwater monitoring.

"One of the things I find interesting is that much of the power being generated in Georgia is going to Florida, and Florida wouldn't allow this plant," Bern said. "We do not want this coal plant to be shut down. We want it to be done safely and monitored. We do not want these people — their lives, their health, their homes — to be threatened."

Adams said that other corporations besides Georgia Power might be parties to the suit. Georgia Power is majority owner and operator of the plant, but six other power companies also own part of some of the plant's four power-generating units. Those include out-of-state companies JEA of Jacksonville, Fla.; Florida Power & Light; and Gulf Power (a sister company to Georgia Power, as both are owned by the Southern Company).

Community meetings scheduled

The law firms are holding

meetings Nov. 1 and Nov. 2 for prospective clients at Rum Creek Banquet Hall at 5840 Dames Ferry Road in Juliette. The Nov. 1 meeting will be at 5:30 p.m. and the Nov. 2 meeting will be at 12:30 p.m.

Georgia Power spokesman Mark Williams said Georgia Power has no comment on the potential lawsuits, but he emphasized that Plant Scherer complies with state and federal air and water

quality standards. He said the plant's ash pond earned the highest rating possible from the EPA during its most recent inspection, and recent tests of drinking water wells on and around the plant showed no violations of safe drinking water standards.

In response to public concerns about uranium contamination and the plant, the Georgia Department of Public Health conducted a

public health survey about uranium and radon in February and March and released a "scoping report" about the health effects of Plant Scherer in July.

That report found that groundwater contamination near the plant from uranium and other heavy metals probably occurs naturally, but it called for further residential well water testing.

Jane Perry, program director for the department's

chemical hazards program, said in July that the response rate for the public health survey was very good. She shared preliminary results and said the analysis of the initial responses would be finished by the end of July, despite plans to reopen the survey to new participants until Sept. 1.

However, by the middle of September the survey still had not been reopened. And Nancy Nydam, media rela-

tions manager for the Georgia Department of Public Health, said the survey results had not been analyzed because the sample pool was not big enough.

Nydam said she was unable to provide a definitive update Wednesday afternoon on the status of the surveys.




To contact writer S. Heather Duncan, call 744-4225.

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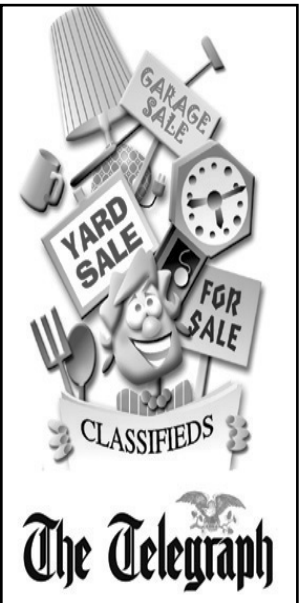
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SEINFELD TO PERFORM IN MACON

World-famous comedian and actor Jerry Seinfeld will perform his signature stand-up comedy routine in Macon. Tickets to the 7 p.m. Feb. 1 show at the Macon City Auditorium will go on sale at 10 a.m. Nov. 9.

Best known for creating and starring in the television show "Seinfeld" from 1989-1998, Seinfeld has spent time acting, writing and performing stand-up comedy since then, both nationally and internationally.

Tickets will be available at the Macon Centreplex Coliseum Box Office located at 200 Coliseum Drive, any Ticketmaster location, online at www.ticketmaster.com or by phone at (800) 745-3000.


Friday | November 2, 2012

MIDDLE GEORGIA'S NEWSPAPER

The Telegraph

macon.com

FVSU president to step down, says goals met



Rivers

By JENNA MINK and CHRISTINA M. WRIGHT
Telegraph staff

FORT VALLEY — Fort Valley Mayor John Stumbo remembers what the local university looked like seven years ago, before Larry Rivers took the reins.

"If you look at the university campus and took a snapshot today and a snapshot seven years ago — it's incredible the difference," he said.

That's why Stumbo said he was sad to hear that Rivers, Fort Valley State University president, plans to step down June 30, 2013. Rivers, a 1973 FVSU alum, became president in March 2006 after serving as dean of the college of arts and sciences at Florida A&M University, where he also taught history.

"These almost seven years have offered exhilaration and challenge, but I feel that our university has been able to move forward and that the goals I set upon my arrival have been met," Rivers said in a news release. "I owe thanks to my administrative team and to all members of the FVSU family."

Rivers could not be reached for further comment by press time Thursday.

During his tenure, Rivers has helped the school progress and lure more students, but he has also endured controversy.

In April, the university's faculty sent Rivers a letter of no confidence.

SEE RIVERS, 3A

WARNER ROBINS VS. NORTHSIDE

THE BIG ONE

Trash-talking students pumped for game

By JENNA MINK
jmink@macon.com

WARNER ROBINS — Kiara Thompson walks into a school office Thursday, wearing all black. One of her classmates sits beside her, donning a black suit and tie. A teacher walks down the hallway, carrying a black rose. A black coffin sits in the cafeteria, guarded by the ROTC.

"We're all sad today," said Thompson, 17, a senior at Northside High School, "because we're going to kill a demon."

Northside students were preparing for Friday's game against Warner Robins High School by pretending to mourn what they claim is the imminent defeat of the Demons — the Warner Robins' mascot.

But Warner Robins students — who were dressed as hippies, cavemen and greasers as part of their "Demons Through the Decades" theme — said no one should be crying.

SEE STUDENTS, 3A



GRANT BLANKENSHIP/gblankenship@macon.com

A rubber chicken, a stand-in for the Northside High School eagle mascot, hangs in the front office of Warner Robins High School on Thursday.

Rivalry tests family's loyalties

By CHRIS DEIGHAN
sports@macon.com

WARNER ROBINS — Libbet Turner blames her husband Rich. It's his fault she has gone a little soft with regards to the Warner Robins-Northside rivalry.

"I was firmly entrenched as a Demon before he went Eagle on me," Libbet Turner said.

Rich Turner "went Eagle" eight years ago when he took a teaching position at Northside. Prior to that, he was a Warner Robins student.

SEE FAMILY, 5A

SHARING MEMORIES

George Collins, Warner Robins

The current Rutland High School head coach was an all-state player at Warner Robins in the 1970s. His fondest memories come from Warner Robins' 17-14 win in 1973.

"Winning is a big thing, but it's even bigger when you come from behind. I don't think about it all the time, but I always think about it this time of the year when the game comes around. About 25 of us get together every summer and we talk about it then, too."

Abry Jones, Northside

The former Northside all-state player and current University of Georgia defensive lineman said on Twitter his fondest memory was clear cut.

"Going undefeated against them."

MORE MEMORIES ARE ON 5A

Meeting held on Plant Scherer

By S. HEATHER DUNCAN
hduncan@macon.com

JULIETTE — Some of those who came to the Thursday night meeting about Plant Scherer clutched photos of sick loved ones. Some carried their medical records. One person brought cloths covered with black filth wiped from her windows and pool. They were among about 50 people who came to Rum Creek Banquet Hall in Juliette to find out how they could sue Georgia Power, majority owner and operator of the Monroe County coal-fired power plant.

It was the first of two meetings being held about the plant.

SEE MEETING, 5A

THE RAIL

YOUR NEWS PRESS



Red Cross accepting Sandy donations

The Central Georgia Red Cross chapters are accepting both monetary and blood donations for victims of Hurricane Sandy.

To donate money, people can write a check or make a credit card donation at the Red Cross headquarters in Macon, 195 Holt Ave.; in Warner Robins, 346 Corder Road; and in Dublin, 505 Bellevue Ave. People can also send the text "REDCROSS" to 90999 to donate \$10 to relief efforts.


In Macon, the blood donation center at 3755 Bloomfield Drive will operate its regular hours: from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesdays; 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Fridays; and 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturdays.

— Phillip Ramati

Shelton, Lambert win song of the year at CMA Awards

In one of the Country Music Association Awards' most emotional moments in recent memory, husband and wife stars Blake Shelton and Miranda Lambert won song of the year Thursday night for the hit "Over You."

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PLANT FROM 1A

held by a team of Macon and New York lawyers. Some said they were ready to file lawsuits over alleged harm to their health and property from the ash generated when the plant burns coal to make electricity — and the 750-acre pond where most of the ash ends up.

Martha Cass, who has lived near the plant since 1975, brought in the cloths showing the residue on her window sills and screens. She said she has multiple sclerosis and gastrointestinal problems she believes are related to breathing and ingesting the coal ash.

She also had pictures of two of her young grandchildren, both of whom live on her street and have cancer.

Holding up Cass's cloths, Macon attorney Brian Adams told those in the room, "If it's getting on your

Dozens of Juliette residents have found unsafe levels of uranium in their well water or airborne radon in their homes. Some of them have been diagnosed with uranium poisoning.

property this way, it's getting in your lungs this way."

The Gautreaux & Adams law firm of Macon is teaming with Napoli Bern Ripka Shkolnik & Associates LLP of New York, a major firm nationally in environmental and personal injury cases. They held the meeting to provide in-

formation and answer questions from community members who might want to sue. A second meeting will be held Friday at 12:30 at the same location.

The attorneys' presentation indicated Plant Scherer has been under investigation by the federal Environmental Protection Agency since August.

The attorneys said they don't want to shut down the plant, but they emphasized Georgia Power's moral and legal obligations.

At first, the crowd seemed a little cool. Then Adams asked for a show of hands: "How many people agree you're supposed to love and respect your neighbor?" Almost every hand shot up high.

"We're here today because we believe that rule applies to everybody, individuals *AND* corporations," Adams said.

He told those attending that a scientific expert told him last

week that every one of the two dozen ash ponds he has studied leached contamination into the groundwater.

Dozens of Juliette residents have found unsafe levels of uranium in their well water or airborne radon in their homes. Some of them have been diagnosed with uranium poisoning. Uranium occurs naturally in the underground rocks of the Piedmont region, but coal ash also concentrates heavy metals and uranium contained in the source coal.

Most of those tests were conducted through University of Georgia labs, and Adams said anyone who files a lawsuit through his legal team will have their water retested by an independent party for free.

"We can't rely on the UGA tests," he said.

Some residents who said they plan to sue haven't tested their wa-

ter because they don't trust UGA, which has strong ties to Georgia Power.

Joseph Jackson and Rickey Fullen, both of Macon, said they might sue over health problems they attribute to years of work at Plant Scherer. For example, Jackson, who worked at Scherer for 16 years in coal handling and on the cooling towers, suffered a collapsed lung in April.

Monroe County resident J.R. Greenway said he's concerned that any lawsuits will be settled without Georgia Power being required to correct the problem by draining and lining the ash pond.

Adams and Marc Bern, who will be one of the primary attorneys leading the cases, said they will only settle if the client desires it. Adams added that other environmental settlements have included conditions that led to fixing the problem.

More Warner Robins vs. Northside memories

Chansi Stuckey, Northside

A former state player of the year at Northside, Stuckey went on to play at Clemson and then six seasons in the NFL. He said on Twitter he had two great memories:

He hurdled a Warner Robins defender during one of the match-ups. And in 2001, he scored a touchdown on the first play of the game, and Warner Robins running back Willie Reid scored on the very next play.

Former Gov. Sonny Perdue, Warner Robins

Perdue was the starting quarterback in the first ever Northside-Warner Robins game in 1964. He passed for 238 yards and three touchdowns in that game. No Warner Robins player has passed for more yards in the game, and no player for either team has thrown for three touchdowns since.

Perdue said he remembered fog covered the field that night. He found a running back up the middle of the field for his final touchdown pass.

"I throw the pass, and it went above the fog. I couldn't see the ball and just waited, and then it dropped out of the fog for the touchdown."

Conrad Nix, Northside

Nix led Northside into battle with Warner Robins 24 times, winning 12. As someone who played a part in so many of these games, Nix's biggest memory was the 1975 contest.

"Both teams were having a great year. The rivalry was still young, and that was one of their best teams, maybe their best team. We won (20-18), and I remember kind of like a tsunami of fans jumping over the fence and running onto the field. People were celebrating all night long."

Dan Jaskula, radio broadcaster

Jaskula said he became the play-by-play man for WRBN-FM radio in 1973 and described his favorite moment in an e-mail.

"I had been told about the huge crowd that would probably be at the International City Stadium, and about 20,000 showed up! The game started with a quick NS TD. But WR came back and the game was tied at 14 all with little time remaining. The Demons drove to the Eagles 15 yard line where Alvin "The Toe" Hutchinson kicked the game winning field goal as time expired. My first WR/NS game was a cardiac caper!"

FAMILY FROM 1A

things were more clear cut for Libbet Turner, who is now in her 26th year as a Spanish teacher at Warner Robins. After all, she is a proud graduate of Washington-Wilkes, where there is no lack of loathing for Lincoln County.

"I was very aware of what a high school rivalry was when I got to (Warner Robins)," she said.

She married Rich Turner. A few years later, he got the Green Street gig. "Before I married Rich, I never thought about the Northside side of things," Libbet Turner said. "But I see how those kids react to him, and it's the same way the Warner Robins kids treat me."

"I know they're good kids at Northside, and I know they're good kids at Warner Robins. And they're great kids at Houston County and Perry and Veterans. We're fortunate to live in a town where we have good kids."

The kids.

That's where things get a little hazy in Libbet Turner's idyllic view of life in the International City. The Turners have two themselves, and they are both boys.

Because of teacher zoning allowances, James, age 10, and Simon, 9, will have their choice of high schools when the time comes. Assuming their parents' employment status doesn't change between now and then, the decision-making process could get very interesting. Are they leaning?

"It depends on what day of the week and who you ask," Libbet Turner said.

The boys play it cool. They're comfortable in the catbird seat. When circumstances allow, they'll alternately hang with players from Northside or Warner Robins during pregame. They attend tailgate parties hosted by families from either side. If pressed, they'll say they're fans of the Deagles — or Eamons. Non-committal. It's the perfect "Be Recruited" strategy.

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SURVEY FROM 1B

“very good” and said survey results would be available in July. She also said the survey would be reopened from July to September to gather more data. Perry said early analysis showed no clusters of illnesses or symptoms, except for almost half of respondents having high blood pressure.

But a few months later, public relations officials for the department said the initial survey results had not been analyzed because the response rate was not high enough to be statistically significant.

Communications director Ryan Deal said Thursday the department initially was pleased with the number of surveys returned.

“Originally the number of service results were impressive to our environmental health team,” he said. “As we began to analyze those, we were able to come to a belief that the issues occurring in that area were occurring naturally, but it was not conclusive. And to make it conclusive, we needed more data, which quite simply is why we reopened the survey.”

Public health officials have said uranium and its byproducts occur naturally in the rocks of the Piedmont region. But some residents have voiced concern about whether the huge unlined coal ash

pond at nearby Plant Scherer, a coal-fired power plant operated by Georgia Power, might be contributing to the uranium contamination.

Deal said the survey was not reopened until Nov. 15 because “it was important to us to do it at the right time when we felt we could gather the most responses,” after running an advertisement in a local newspaper and updating their website to make it easier to find the survey.

“This has got to be a very deliberate process,” he said. “Health issues are very sensitive.”

Survey respondents are asked to give their names and addresses, but identifying information will not be included in the health department’s reports, according to a news release issued by the department.

The survey requests information about water test results, personal history in the home, environmental concerns and personal health history.

The survey states that health officials are seeking a 70 percent return rate among surveys distributed in December and indicates that the results will be available in January. The results will be used to develop a health education program in the spring, the survey indicates.

Donna Welch, whose family found that its air and wa-

ter contained high levels of uranium and radon, encouraged many people to fill out surveys last winter.

“It has been frustrating to me because I’ve said they’d be putting the survey back out and making arrangements to get it to people, and months later there’s nothing,” she said. “I know these things take time, but I do not know why it has gone so slowly.”

She said residents who sent water samples for further radionuclide testing at an EPA lab over the summer are still awaiting those results, too.

“We were told the EPA results would be back by the end of October, and here it is the middle of November,” Welch said. “And that bothers me, too.”

Deal said the public health department has received a limited number of these test results, which so far indicates naturally occurring uranium. Once all the results are in, the department will conduct a full analysis, he said.

Surveys may be filled out at www.dph.ga.gov/survey or may be obtained at the Rum Creek Store, 8703 Ga. 87, Juliette, or at the Monroe County Cooperative Extension Office at 90 Martin L. King Jr. Drive in Forsyth. They can also be obtained by calling Pamela Noah, public health consultant, at (404) 657-6532.

GRIS FROM 1B

had some input on the design, so that empowered him, his mother said.

It is decorated with Northside’s colors — blue, white and orange — with a big eagle. JaQue added a stripe down the back.

While his presence on the roster has inspired his teammates, JaQue had to look no further than a well-known Northside alum for his own inspiration.

Tommy Gray, who played football at Northside from 2001-04, contracted meningitis when he was 4 years old and had both legs amputated. At the time he played at Northside, the Georgia High School Association did not allow prosthetic limbs in competition.

So Tommy lined up in the trenches and went to war on his two stumps. At 3 feet tall, he was the equivalent of a single yard stripe on the field. (He is now playing competitive wheelchair basketball in Europe.)

JaQue saw action in half of Northside’s 10 regular-season games this season. His position is nose guard, in the center of the defensive line. Sometimes it is difficult for him to get low and plug up the

middle because his heavily padded leg has limited flexibility.

But he did have a sack against cross-town rival Veterans High earlier in the season. He won’t ever forget that.

This past weekend, JaQue helped lead the Houston County Sharks to the state title in handball in the American Association of Adapted Sports.

Friday night, he will suit up for undefeated and top-ranked Northside’s first-round Class AAAAA playoff game against Effingham County at McConnell-Talbert Stadium.

So, yes, JaQue has his sights on being part of two state championships this fall.

Cynthia Billingsley sits in the stands at every game and can’t help but smile herself as she watches the son with big No. 91 across his back, chest and the tops of his shoulder pads.

He approaches the game with what she calls “heart and passion.” He has talked about becoming a coach one day.

For Northside fans, JaQue Billingsley is a star player in his own right.

“It’s not just a single story — it’s a daily story,” Kinsler said. “There’s always that smile on his face. Attitude is everything. You hear that a lot, but not everybody practices it like JaQue does.”

LIGHTING FROM 1B

har Marupudi, the director of energy and sustainability solutions at Wipro’s Alpharetta office.

Board members Susan Middleton, Tommy Barnes, Tom Hudson and Ella Carter approved the motion, while Gary Bechtel voted against it. The three other board members were not present.

If the district doesn’t achieve projected savings, the company will pay the school system the difference between the savings and costs, Marupudi said.

Bechtel raised questions about the way the school system reached the agreement, saying Bibb County was not following state rules in entering a contract with Wipro.

Also, Bechtel and Superintendent Romain Dallemand disagreed about previous board action on the matter.

Bechtel said the board previously approved a feasibility study of induction lighting, while Dallemand said the board later approved the system to enter into contract negotiations. Meeting minutes show the board approved a feasibility study in April, and while the contract says the board authorized contract negotiations in July, the minutes don’t mention those negotiations.

“There’s an array of contradictions here that I’m not comfortable with,” Bechtel said during the meeting. “I would like to have this cleared up.”

Hudson, however, said the cost savings from the light-

ing installation would benefit the district, and he pushed for a vote Thursday.

“This is something we should vote on to move forward,” he said.

Bechtel pointed to a news release the system issued in September about a collaboration with the school system, the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority for an energy-savings project in Bibb County that included the induction lighting project.

But Bechtel said he spoke to GEFA Executive Director Kevin Clark about the collaboration. Bechtel said Clark told him school attorneys contacted the authority only once to find out whether Wipro was on a list of GEFA’s pre-qualified companies that can compete for contracts. Otherwise, Bechtel said, there was no other contact between the school system and GEFA.

Attorney Andrea Jolliffe, an outside attorney who represents the Bibb school system, said school attorneys called GEFA several times about best practices, background and other information.

Jolliffe said attorneys did not speak to Clark.

Representatives with the state Department of Education also said Thursday they were not aware of a collaboration with Bibb County.

“The Georgia Department of Education did not collaborate with Bibb County on this project, and we are not aware of anyone at GEFA who collaborated with Bibb County on it,” spokeswoman Dorie Nolt wrote in an e-

mail to The Telegraph.

The school system would implement the induction lighting project through a guaranteed energy-savings performance contract, according to the release.

That type of contract allows local boards to enter into an agreement with a “qualified energy service provider,” according to state rules. School systems must save more money annually with the new equipment than it costs to install and operate it.

Bechtel also said Wipro was not on the state’s pre-qualified list, which Marupudi acknowledged.

Marupudi said the company has done work for companies such as Home Depot and Best Buy.

Barnes, the school board’s president, asked whether Wipro’s exclusion from the list would be an issue, and Jolliffe said local districts do not have to use GEFA’s list of companies, according to state law.

After the meeting, Bechtel said the system doesn’t need to spend the money on the induction lighting, as schools such as Central and Southwest high schools already have the latest technology.

In other business, the school system discussed new safety and discipline measures on school buses, including adopting a more standardized process to reporting incidents. The system also will begin offering classes at the Welcome Center to parents and students who are in danger of losing bus riding privileges.

LOW MALE TESTOSTERONE IS A BIGGER PROBLEM THAN YOU THINK!



Doctors discover natural compound that ‘resets’ a man’s biological clock, to rev up energy and stamina to that of a 20-year-old!

Millions of men suffer from low testosterone, but very few of them want to talk or even think about it – because the symptoms of low testosterone cut to the very core of their self-confidence and masculine identity. They include:

- Decreased muscle tone
- Increased fatigue and irritability
- Depression
- Low or decreased sex drive
- Impaired sexual performance
- Restless sleep
- Decreased stamina and strength
- Inability to concentrate

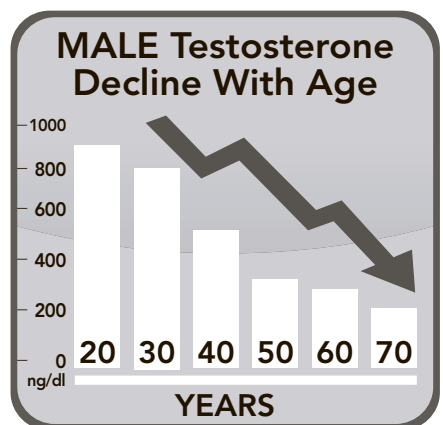
A rather daunting list, wouldn’t you say? And yet the ravages of low testosterone can go well beyond feeling tired and blah all the time. It can raise your cholesterol and blood pressure and put you at greater risk for such medical ills as heart disease, stroke, osteoporosis, reduced immune function, and even memory loss! It’s really quite alarming, yet most men simply ignore it because... well, because some of those symptoms are just too shameful and embarrassing to face.

But guess what?

All that misery is totally unnecessary – because low testosterone happens to be very normal – and very treatable!

According to the FDA, even though about five million men in the U.S. may suffer from some sort of testosterone deficiency – only about 5% of them will ever seek treatment! That’s a lot of needless depression and sexual frustration, don’t you think?

The fact is that lower testosterone is a completely normal sign of aging. By the time a man is 70, he is producing (on average) just half the testosterone of a 20-year-old.



Testosterone levels begin to decline in the mid-twenties and continually diminish thereafter. Testosterone is usually measured in nanograms per deciliter (ng/dl)—the number of billionths of a gram found in 100 milliliters of blood serum. The “normal range” usually reported on a laboratory report runs from about 290 to 900 ng/dl.

“It’s like having the life force sucked out of you!”

That’s how one guy described his low-testosterone blues – *but it really doesn’t have to be that way.* Not now, and not ever – because now there’s a new, safe, and clinically proven way to boost your testosterone level and regain your manhood. You don’t need a prescription or expensive visits to your doctor.

And you don’t even need to risk your hard-earned money – because **TrueMaleIQ** is now available (while supplies last) on a satisfaction-guaranteed basis! We are that confident that you are simply going to be thrilled and delighted by the new reinvigorated you – or else get your money back.

Why is TrueMaleIQ the real deal for boosting your most essential male hormone?

The key ingredient in **TrueMaleIQ** – Testofen™ – raises your T-level naturally, which can restore your vim, vitality, and

put you “back in the mood” more quickly than you ever thought possible. In just a few days, the “old you” – from 10 or even 20 years ago – is back. You’re going to flat out love it – and so will your pleasantly surprised partner!

Testofen™ is an exclusively formulated extract of fenugreek standardized for 50% Fenuside. Fenuside is a set of potent saponide glycosides that not only enables your body to produce more testosterone, but also emulates testosterone by binding to testosterone receptor sites and creating testosterone-like activity.

In other words, Testofen™ provides a unique dual mechanism for replenishing your testosterone-starved body. Subjects reported an increase of nearly 9% in their overall testosterone levels. More impressively, there was a reported average increase of more than 60% in the subjects’ free testosterone levels.

Such a significant elevation of testosterone can help build muscle mass, restore energy, increase your stamina – and, perhaps best of all – get you more “into the mood!”



“I decided to try TrueMaleIQ and 3 weeks into taking the product I am seeing great results. That little bit of energy and motivation I’ve been missing has returned!”

- Christopher M., TX



“Searched extensively and luckily found this product, as Testofen seems to be the only herbal extract that actually increases my testosterone levels.”

- Adam R., FLA



“This product is the one and only supplement that really turned me back into a man again! My muscle mass and energy is finally increasing.”

- Brad L., GA

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TrueMaleIQ can also do wonders for your love life. This formula is clinically shown to increase libido in men, boosting both drive and desire. In a six-week clinical study (double-blind, randomized and placebo-controlled) the unique **TrueMaleIQ** formula significantly increased in sexual function, performance and satisfaction for men taking the supplement over those on the placebo. What will your test trial of **TrueMaleIQ** show? We’ve just made it easier than ever to find out!

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This risk-free trial is reserved for the first 100 readers of this newspaper who respond to this ad. You’ll receive a one-month supply of **TrueMaleIQ**, backed by our no-risk 100% Satisfaction Guarantee: if you’re not happy with the “new you” empowered by this amazing new testosterone-boosting diet supplement, then you don’t pay!

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